MY DAY: REMINISCENCES *of a* LONG LIFE

MRS. ROGER A. PRYOR

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MY DAY

REMINISCENCES OF A LONG LIFE

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Mrs. Roger A. Pryor.

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.P97

MY DAY

REMINISCENCES OF A LONG LIFE

BY

MRS. ROGER A. PRYOR

AUTHOR OF "REMINISCENCES OF PEACE AND WAR,"
"THE MOTHER OF WASHINGTON AND HER
TIMES," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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To the Memory of

My Son

Theodorick Bland Pryor

45519

I stood at dawn by a limitless sea
And watched the rose creep over the gray;
Till the heavens were a glowing canopy!
This was my day!

The pale stars stole away, one by one —
Like sensitive souls from the presence of Pride:
The moon hung low, looking back, as the sun
Rose over the tide.

And he, like a King, came up from the Sea!
He opened my rose — unfettered my song —
And quickened a heart to be true to me
All the day long.

The soul that was born of a song and flower
Of tender dawn-flush, and shadowy gray,
Was strengthened by Love for a bitter hour
That chilled my day.

I had dwelt in the garden of the Lord!
I had gathered the sweets of a summer day:
I was called to stand where a flaming sword
Turned every way.

It spared not the weak — nor the strong — nor the dear;
And following fast, like a phantom band,
Famine and Fever and shuddering Fear
Swept o'er the land.

They whispered that Hope, the angel of light,
Would spread her white wings and speed her away;
But she folded me close in my longest night
And darkest day.

As of old, when the fire and tempest had passed,
And an earthquake had riven the rocks, the Word
In a still small voice rose over the blast —
The Voice of the Lord.

And the Voice said: "Take up your lives again!
Quit yourselves manfully! Stand in your lot!
Let the Famine, the Fever, the Peril, the Pain,
Be all forgot!

" Weep no more for the lovely, the brave,
The young head pillowed on a blood-stained sod;
The daisy that grows on the soldier's grave
Looks up to God!

" The soul of the patriot-soldier stands
With a mighty host in eternal calm,
And He who pressed the sword to his hands
Has given the Palm."

* * * * * *

And now I stand with my face to the west,
Shading mine eyes, for my glorious sun
Is splendid again as he sinks to his rest —
His day is done.

I have lost my rose, forgotten my song,
But the true heart that loved me is mine alway;
The stars are alight — the way not long —
I had my day!

November 8, 1908.

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MY DAY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

I AM constrained to encourage a possible reader by assuring him that I have no intention whatever of writing strictly an autobiography. Nothing in myself nor in my life would warrant me in so doing.

I might, perhaps, except the story of the Civil War, and my part in the trials and sorrows of my fellow-women, but this story I have fully and truly told in my " Reminiscences of Peace and War."

My countrymen were so kind to these first stories that I feel I may claim some credentials as a " babbler of Reminiscences." Besides, I have lived in the last two-thirds of the splendid nineteenth century, and have known some of the men and women who made that century notable. And I would fain believe with Mr. Trollope that " the small records of an unimportant individual life, the memories which happen to linger in the brain of the old like bits of drift-wood floating round and round in the eddies of a back-water, can more vividly than anything else bring before the young of the present generation those ways of acting and thinking and talking in the everyday affairs of life which indicate the differences between themselves and their grandfathers."

But I shall have more than this "floating driftwood" to reward the reader who will follow me to the end of my story!

Writers of Reminiscences are interested — perhaps more interested than their readers — in recalling their earliest sensations, and through them determining at what age they had "found themselves"; *i.e.* become conscious of their own personality and relation to the world they had entered.

Long before this time the child has seen and learned more perhaps than he ever learned afterwards in the same length of time. He has acquired knowledge of a language sufficient for his needs. His miniature world has been, in many respects, a foreshadowing of the world he will know in his maturity. He has learned that he is a citizen of a country with laws, — some of which it will be prudent to obey, — such as the law against taking unpermitted liberties with the cat, or touching the flame of the candle; while other laws may be evaded by cleverness and discreet behavior. He finds around him many things; pictures on walls, for instance, that may be admired but never touched, — other lovely things that may be handled and even kissed, but must be returned to mantels and tables, — and yet others, not near as delightful as these, "poor things but his own," to be caressed or beaten, or even broken at his pleasure. He has learned to indulge his natural taste for the drama. His nurse covers her head with a paper and becomes the dreadful, groaning villain behind it, while the baby girds himself for attack, tears the disguise from the villain, and shouts his victory. As he learns the names and peculiarities of animals, the scope of the drama widens. He is a spirited horse, snorting and charging along, or — if his picture-books have been favorable — a roaring lion from whom the nurse flees in terror. Of the domestic play there is infinite variety — nursing in sickness, the doctor, baby-tending, cooking, — and once, alas! I heard a baby girl of eighteen months enact a fearful quarrel between man and wife, ending firmly "I leave you! I never come back!"

These natural tendencies of children would seem to prove that the soul or mind of man can be "fetched up from the cradle" — a phrase for which I am indebted to one of my contemporaries, Mr. Leigh Hunt, who in turn quoted it as a popular phrase in his late (and my early) day. But with the single exception of the spoken language all these childish plays have been successfully taught to our humble brothers; to our poor relation the monkey, the dog, elephant, seal, canary bird — even to fleas. All these are capable of enacting a short drama. The elephant, longing for his bottle, never rings his bell too soon. The dog remembers his cue, watches for it, and never anticipates it. The seal, more wonderful than all, born as he has been without arms or legs, mounts a horse for a ride, and waits for his umbrella to be poised on his stubby nose. Even the creature whose name is a synonym for vulgar stupidity has been taught to indicate with porcine finger the letters which spell that name.

With these and other animals we hold in common our faculty of imitation, our memory, affection, antipathy, revenge, gratitude, passionate adoration of one special friend, and even the perception of music — the infant will weep and the poodle howl in response to the same strain in a minor key — and yet, notwithstanding this common lot, this common inheritance, there is born for us and not for them a moment when some strange unseen power breathes into us something akin to consciousness of a living soul.

Having no past as a standard for the reasonable and natural, nothing surprises children. They are simply witnesses of a panorama in the moving scenes of which they have no part. When I was three years old, I visited my grandfather in Charlotte County. The Staunton River wound around his plantation and I was often taken out rowing with my aunts. One day the canoe tipped and my pretty Aunt Elizabeth fell overboard. Without the slightest emotion I saw her fall, and saw her recovered. For aught I knew to the contrary it was usual and altogether proper for young ladies to fall in rivers and be fished out by their long hair. But another event, quite ordinary, overwhelmed me with the most passionate distress. Having, a short time before, advanced a tentative finger for an experimental taste of an apple roasting for me at my grandfather's fire, I was prepared to be shocked at seeing a colony of ants rush madly about upon wood a servant was laying over the coals. My cries of distress arrested my grandfather as he passed through the room. He quickly ordered the sticks to be taken off, and calling me to a seat in front of him, said gravely: "We will try these creatures and see if they deserve punishment. Evidently they have invaded our country. The question is, did they come of their own accord, or were they while enjoying their rights of life and liberty, captured by us and brought hither against their will?" My testimony was gravely taken. I was quite positive I had seen the sticks, swarming with ants, laid upon the fire. "Uncle Peter," who had brought in the wood, was summoned and sharply cross-questioned. Nothing could shake him. To the best of his knowledge and belief, "them ants nuvver come 'thouten they was 'bleeged to," and so, as they were by this time wildly scampering over the floor, they were gently admonished by a persuasive broom to leave the premises. Uncle Peter was positive they would find their way home without difficulty, and I was comforted.

I remember this little incident perfectly; I can see my dear grandfather, his white hair tied with a black ribbon *en queue*, advancing his stick like a staff of office. I claim that then and there — three years old — I found myself, "fetched up my soul" from somewhere, almost "from the cradle," inasmuch as I had pitied the unfortunate, unselfishly espoused his cause, and won for him consideration and justice.

Writers of fiction are supposed to present, as in a mirror, the truth as it is found in nature. They are fond of hinting that at some moment in the early life of every individual something occurs which foreshadows his fate, something which if interpreted — like the dreams of the ancient Hebrews — would tell us without the aid of gypsy, medium, or clairvoyant the things we so ardently desire to know. In Daniel Deronda, Gwendolyn, in her moment of triumph, touches a spring in a panel, which, sliding back, reveals a picture, — the upturned face of a drowning man. In Lewis Rand, Jacqueline, the bride of half an hour, hears the story of a duel — and the pistol-shot echoes ever after through her brain, filling it with insistent foreboding.

We might recall illustrations of similar foreshadowing in real life. For instance, Jean Carlyle, six years old, beautiful and vivid as a tropical bird, stands before an audience to sing her little song; and waits in vain for her accompanist. Finally she throws her apron over her head and runs away in confusion. *She* was prepared, she knew her part; but the support was lacking, the accompaniment failed her. It was not given to him who told the story to perceive the prophecy!

Were I fanciful enough to fix upon one moment as prophetic of my life — as a key-note to the controlling principle of that life — I might recall the incident in my grandfather's room, when I ceased to be merely an inert absorber of light and warmth and comfort, and became aware of the *pain* in the world — pain which I passionately longed to alleviate.

CHAPTER II

I HAD a childless aunt, who annually came up from her home in Hanover to spend part of the summer with my parents and my grandfather. She begged me of my mother for a visit, meant to be a brief one, and as she was greatly loved and respected by her people, I was permitted to return with her.

There were no railroads in Virginia at that time. All journeys were made in private conveyances. The great coach-and-four had disappeared after the Revolution. The carriage and pair, with the goatskin hair trunk strapped on behind, or — in case the journey were long — a light wagon for baggage, were now enough for the migratory Virginian.

He lived at home except for the three summer months, when it was his invariable rule to visit Saratoga, or the White Sulphur, Warm, and Sweet Springs, of Virginia, making a journey to the latter, in something less than a week, now accomplished from New York in eight or nine hours.

The carriage on high springs creaked and rocked like a ship at sea. Fortunately, it was well cushioned and padded within — and furnished at the four corners with broad double straps through which the arms of the passenger could be thrust to steady himself withal. He needed them in the pitching and jolting over the rocks and ruts of dreadful roads. Inside each door were ample pockets for sundry comforts — biscuits, sandwiches, apples, restorative medicines and cordials, books and papers. A flight of three or four carpeted steps was folded inside the door. Twenty-five miles were considered "a day's journey," quite enough for any pair of horses. At noon the latter were rested under the shade of trees near some spring or clear brook, the carriage cushions were laid out, and the luncheon! Well, I cannot presume to be greater than the greatest of all our American artists, — he who could mould a hero in bronze and make him live again; and hold us, silent and awed, in the presence of the mysterious and unspeakable grief of a woman in marble! Has he not confessed that although he remembers an early perception of beauty in sky and sea, and field and wood — the memory that has followed him vividly through life is of odors from a baker's oven, and from apples stewing in a German neighbor's kitchen? Hot gingerbread and spiced, sugared apples! I should say so, indeed!

In just such a carriage as I have described, I set forth with my strange aunt and uncle — a little three-and-a-half-year-old! At night we slept in some country tavern, surrounded by whispering aspen trees. A sign in front, swung like a gibbet, promised "Refreshment for man and beast." Invariably the landlord, grizzled, portly, and solemn, was lying at length on a bench in his porch or lounging in a "split-bottom chair" with his feet on the railing. He had seen our coming from afar. He was eager for custom, but he had dignity to maintain. Lifting himself slowly from his bench or chair, he would leisurely come forward, and hesitatingly "reckon" he could accommodate us. I was mortally afraid of him! Sinking into one of his deep feather beds, I trembled for my life and wept for my mother.

Finally one night, wearied out with the long journey, we turned into an avenue of cedars and neared our home. My aunt and uncle, on the cushions of the back seat, little dreamed of the dire resolve of the small rebel in front. Like the ants, I had been brought, against my will, to a strange country. I silently determined I would not be a good little girl. I would be as naughty as I could, give all the trouble I could, and force them to send me home again. But with the morning sun came perfect contentment, which soon blossomed into perfect happiness. From my bed I ran out in my bare feet to a lovely veranda shaded by roses. On one of the latticed bars a little wren bobbed his head in greeting, and poured out his silver thread of a song. Gabriella, the great tortoise-shell cat, with high uplifted tail, wooed and won me; and when Milly, black and smiling, captured me, it was to introduce me to an adorable doll and a little rocking-chair.

From that hour until I married I was the happy queen of the household, the one whose highest good was wisely considered and for whose happiness all the rest lived.

The bond between my aunt and her small niece could never be sundered, and as she was greatly loved and trusted, and as many children blessed my own dear mother, I was practically adopted as the only child of my aunt and uncle, Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Pleasants Hargrave.

CHAPTER III

THE general impression I retain of the world of my childhood is of gardens — gardens everywhere; abloom with roses, lilies, violets, jonquils, flowering almond-trees which never fruited, double-flowering peach trees which also bore no fruit, but were, with the almond trees, cherished for the beauty of their blossoms. And conservatories! These began deep in the earth and were built two stories high at the back of the house. They were entered by steps going down and only thus were they entered. Windows opened into them from the parlor (always "parlor," — not drawing-room) or from my lady's chamber. On the floor were great tubs of orange and lemon trees and the gorgeous flowering pomegranate. Along the walls were shelves reached by short ladders, and on these shelves were ranged cacti, gardenias (Cape Jessamine, or jasmine, as we knew this queen of flowers), abutilon, golden globes of lantana, and the much-prized snowy Camellia Japonica, sure to sent packed in cotton as gifts to adorn the dusky tresses of some Virginia beauty, or clasp the folds of her diaphanous kerchief. These camellias, long before they were immortalized by the younger Dumas, were reckoned the most poetic and elegant of all flowers — so pure and sensitive, resenting the profanation of the slightest touch. No cavalier of that day would present to his ladye faire the simple flowers we love to-day. These would come fast enough with the melting of the snows early in February.

I have never forgotten the ecstasy of one of these early February mornings. Mittened and hooded I ran down the garden walk from which the snow had been swept and piled high on either side. Delicious little rivers were running down and I launched a mighty fleet of leaves and sticks. Suddenly I beheld a miracle. The snow was lying thickly all around, but the sun had melted it from a south bank, and white violets — hundreds of them — had popped out. I spread my apron on the clean snow and filled it with the cool, crisp blossoms. Running in exultant I poured my treasure into my dear aunt's lap as she sat on a low chair which brought my head just on a level with her bosom. Ah! Like St. Gaudens, I remember the gingerbread and apples! — but I remember the violets also!

I can see myself in the early hot summer, sent forth to breathe the cool air of the morning. What a paradise of sweets met my senses! The squares, crescents, and circles edged with box, over which an enchanted glistening veil had been thrown during the night; the tall lilacs, snowballs, myrtles, and syringas, guarding like sentinels the entrance to every avenue; the glowing beds of tulips, pinks, purple iris, "bleeding hearts," flowering almond with rosy spikes, lily-of-the-valley! I scanned them all with curious eyes. Did I not know that the fairies, riding on butterflies, had visited each one and painted it during the night? Did I not know that these same fairies had hung their cups on the grass, and danced so long that the cups grew fast to the blades of grass and became lilies-of-the-valley? I knew all this — although my dear aunt never approved of fairy tales and gave me no fairy-tale books. Cousin Charles believed them; moreover, I had a charming picture of a fairy, riding on a butterfly. Of course they were true.

But I always hurried along, with small delay, among the flower beds. I knew where the passion-vine had dropped golden globes of fruit during the night — and I knew well where the cool figs, rimy with the early dew, were bursting with scarlet sweetness. Tell me not of your acrid grape-fruit, or far-fetched orange, wherewithal to break the morning fast! I know of something better. Alas! neither you nor I can ever again — except in fancy — cool our lips with the dew-washed fruits of an "old Virginia" garden.

It seems to me that the life we led at Cedar Grove and Shrubbery Hill was busy beyond all parallel. Everything the family and the plantation needed was manufactured at home, except the fine fabrics, the perfumes, wines, etc., which were brought from Richmond, Baltimore, or Philadelphia. Everything, from the goose-quill pen to carpets, bedspreads, coarse cotton cloth, and linsey-woolsey for servants' clothing, was made at home. Even corset-laces were braided of cotton threads, the corset itself of home manufacture.

Miss Betsey, the housekeeper, was the busiest of women. Besides her everlasting pickling, preserving, and cake-baking, she was engaged, with my aunt, in mysterious incantations over cordials, tonics, camomile, wild cherry, bitter bark, and "vinegar of the four thieves," to be used in sickness.

The recipe for the latter — well known in Virginia households a century ago — was probably brought by Thomas Jefferson from France in 1794. He was a painstaking collector of everything of practical value. To this day there exists in the French druggists' code a recipe known as the "Vinaigre des Quatre Voleurs"; and it is that given by condemned malefactors who, according to official records still existing in France, entered deserted houses in the city of Marseilles during a yellow fever epidemic in the seventeenth century and carried off immense quantities of plunder. They seemed to possess some method of preserving themselves from the scourge. Being finally arrested and condemned to be burned to death, an offer was made to change the method of inflicting their punishment if they would reveal their secret. The condemned men then confessed that they always wore over their faces handkerchiefs that had been saturated in strong vinegar and impregnated with certain ingredients, the principal one being bruised garlic.

The recipe, still preserved in the Randolph family of Virginia, is an odd one — with a homely flavor — hardly to be expected of a French formula. It requires simply "lavender, rosemary, sage, wormwood, rue and mint, of each a large handful; put them in a pot of earthenware, cover the pot closely, and put a board on the top; keep it in the hottest sun two weeks, then strain and bottle it, putting in each a clove of garlic. When it has settled in the bottle and becomes clear, pour it off gently; do this until you get it all free from sediment. The proper time to make it is when herbs are in full vigor, in June."

Only a housewife, who lived in an age of abundant leisure, could afford to interest herself for two weeks in the preparation of a bottle of the "Vinegar of the Four Thieves." The housekeeper of to-day can steep her herbs, then strain them through one of the fine sieves in her pantry, the whole operation costing little labor and time, with perhaps as good results. If she is inclined to make the experiment, she will achieve a decoction which has the merit at least of romance, the secret of its combination having been purchased by sparing the lives of four distinguished Frenchmen, with the present practical value of providing a refreshing prophylactic for the sick room,—provided the lavender, rosemary, sage, wormwood, rue, and mint completely stifle the clove of garlic!

Pepper and spices were pounded in marble mortars. Sugar was purchased in the bulk—in large cones wrapped in thick blue paper. This was broken into great slices, and then subdivided into cubes by means of a knife and hammer.

Sometimes a late winter storm would overtake the new-born lambs, and they would be found forsaken by the flock. The little shivering creatures would be brought to a shelter, and fed with warm milk from the long bottles, in which even now we get Farina Cologne. Soft linen was wrapped around the slender neck, and my dear aunt fed the nurslings with her own white hands. How the lambkins could wag their tiny tails! and how they grew and prospered!

All the fine muslins of the family, my aunt's great collars, and the ruffles worn by my uncle, my Cousin Charles, and myself, were carefully laundered under my aunt's supervision. Dipped in pearly starch, they were "clapped dry" in our own hands, ironed with small irons, and beautifully crimped on a board with a penknife. Fine linen was a kind of hall-mark by which a gentleman was "known in the gates when he" sat "among the elders of the land."

I was intensely interested in all this busy life—and always eager to be a part of it.

There was nothing I had not attempted before I rounded my first decade,—churning, printing the butter with wooden moulds, or shaping it into a bristling pineapple; spinning on tiptoe at the great wheel—we had no flax-wheels—and even once scrambling up to the high seat of the weaver and sending the shuttle into hopeless tangles. "Ladies don't nuvver do dem things" sternly rebuked Milly. "Lemme ketch you ergin at dat business, an' 'twont be wuf while for Marse Chawles to baig for you."

The inconsistencies as to proprieties puzzled me then and have puzzled me ever since.

"Why mustn't I spin and churn, Milly?" I insisted.

"Ain't I done tole you? Ladies don't nuvver do dem things."

"Then why can I help with the laces and muslins?"

"Cause—ladies *does* do dem things."

And so I became an expert *blanchisseuse de fin*, as it was the one household industry allowed my caste.

There was no railroad to bring us luxuries from the nearest town—Richmond—twenty-five miles distant, and we depended upon the little covered cart of Aunt Mary Miller. Aunt Mary and her husband, Uncle Jacob, were old family servants who had been given their freedom. They lived at the foot of a hill near our house, and down the path, slippery with fallen pine needles, I was often sent with Milly to summon Uncle Jacob, who was the coachman. He was very old, and gray, and always unwilling to "hitch up de new kerridge in dis bad weather." He would stand on the lawn and scan the horizon in every direction—and a dim, distant haze was enough to daunt him. Aunt Mary was allowed to collect eggs, poultry, and peacock's feathers from the neighbors, take them down to Richmond to her waiting customers, and return with sundry delightful things,—Peter Parley's books, a wax doll, oranges and candy for me, and wonderful stories of the splendors she had seen. She had other stories than these. One night "a hant" had walked around her cart and "skeered" her old horse "pretty nigh outen his senses"; as to herself, "Humph, I'se used to hants."

"*Where*, Aunt Mary, tell me," I begged. With a furtive glance lest my elders would hear, she answered:—

"I ain't sayin' nothin'. Don't you go an' say *I* tole you anythin'. Jes you run down to the back of the gyardin as fur as the weepin' willer an' you'll know."

Of course I knew already what I should find beneath the willow. I had often stood at the foot of the two long white slabs and read: "Sacred to the Memory of Charles Crenshaw" and "Sacred to the Memory of Susannah Crenshaw." I knew their story. This had been their home. The brother had died early, and for love of him the sister had broken her heart. My sweet great-aunt Susannah! Had she not left a lovely Chinese basket—which I was to inherit—full of curious and precious things; a carved ivory fan, necklace, pearls, and amethysts, and a treasure of musk-scented yellow lace? Aunt Mary shook her head when I announced scornfully that I wasn't afraid of my Aunt Susannah.

"I ain't talkin'! Miss Susannah used to war blue satin high-heeled slippers. You jes listen! Some o' dese dark nights you'll hear sump'n goin' '*click, click.*'"

"I know, Aunt Mary. That's the death-head moth. Milly says it won't hurt anybody, without you meddle with it."

"Humph! *Milly!* I seed hants befo' her mammy was bawn! *I* tells you it's Miss Susannah comin' on her high heels to see if you meddlin' with her things. I knowed Miss Susannah! she was monsous particlar. She ain't nuvver goin' to let you war *her* things."

I was a wretched child for a long time after this. Whenever I retired into the inner chambers of my imagination — as was my wont when grown-up people talked politics, or religion, or slavery — I found my pretty fairies all fled, and in their places hollow-eyed goblins and ghosts. If my gentle Aunt Susannah was permitted to come back to her home, how about all the others who had lived there? My aunt coming for her final good-night kiss would uncover a hot face, to be instantly recovered upon her departure. *Par parenthèse*, I never did wear Aunt Susannah's jewels. All disappeared mysteriously except the chain of lovely beads. These I wore. One night I slept in them and the next morning they were gone. Whither? Ah, you must call up some one of those long-time sleepers. According to latter-day lights, they may "come when you do call." They may know. I never did know.

CHAPTER IV

NO house in Virginia was more noted for hospitality than my uncle's. I remember an ever coming and going procession of Taylors, Pendletons, Flemings, Fontaines, Pleasants, etc. These made small impression upon me. Men might come and men might go, but my lessons went on forever; writing, geography, and much reading. I had Mrs. Sherwood's books. I wonder if any present-day child reads "Little Henry and his Bearer," or Miss Edgeworth's "Rosamond," or "Peter Parley's Four Quarters of the Globe"! Hannah More was the great influence with my aunt and her friends. "Thee will be a second Hannah More" was the highest praise the literary family at Shrubbery Hill could possibly give me. Mr. Augustine Birrell could never have written his sarcastic review of her in my day. It would not have been tolerated. From Miss Edgeworth, Cowper, Burns, St. Pierre, my aunt read aloud to me. On every centre table, along with the astral lamp, lay a sumptuous volume in cream and gold. This was the elegant annual "Friendship's Offering," containing the much-admired poems of one Alfred Tennyson, collaborating with his brother Charles. Miss Martineau was much discussed and was distinctly unpopular. Stories were told of her peculiarities, her ignorance of the etiquette of polite society at the North. When she was in Washington in 1835, she was invited by Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith to an informal dinner at five o'clock. Mrs. Smith had requested three friends to meet her, and had arranged for "a small, genteel dinner." She had descended to the parlor at an early hour to arrange some flowers, when her daughter informed her that Miss Martineau and her companion, Miss Jeffrey, had arrived, and were upstairs in her bedroom, having requested to be shown to a chamber. Mrs. Smith wrote to Mrs. Kirkpatrick: "I hastened upstairs and found them combing their hair! They had taken off their bonnets and large capes. 'You see,' said Miss Martineau, 'we have complied with your request and come sociably to spend the day with you. We have been walking all the morning; our lodgings were too distant to return, so we have done as those who have no carriages do in England when they go to pass a social day.' I offered her combs, brushes, etc., but showing me the enormous pockets in her French dress she said that they were provided with all that was necessary, and pulled out nice little silk shoes, silk stockings, a scarf for her neck, little lace mits, a gold chain, and some other jewellery, and soon, without changing her dress, was prettily equipped for dinner or evening company. It was a rich treat to hear her talk when the candles were lit and the curtains drawn. Her words flow in a continuous stream, her voice is pleasing, her manners quiet and ladylike." She was thought to be unfriendly to the South — which I have the best of reasons for believing was true.

All this I heard with unheeding ears, but a delicious, memorable hour awaited me. Some guest had brought her maid, and from her I heard a wonderful fairy-godmother story,— of one Cinderella, whose light footstep would not break a glass slipper.

Uncle Remus had not yet dawned upon a waiting world of children, but Cowper had written charmingly about hares and how to domesticate them. I had a flourishing colony of "little Rabs." Some of my humble friends were domiciled in the small playhouse built for me in the garden. Into this sacred refuge, ascended by a flight of tiny steps, even Gabriella was forbidden to enter. I could just manage to stand under the low ceiling. There I entertained a strange company. I had no toys of any description, and only one doll, which was much too fine for every day. Flowers and forked sticks served for the *dramatis personæ* of my plays.

I had never heard of Æsop or of Aristophanes, but it was early given to me to discern the excellent points of frogs. I caught a number of them on the sandy margin of a little brook which ran at the bottom of the garden, and Milly helped me to dress them in bits of muslin and lace. Their ungraceful figures forbade their masquerading as ladies, — a frog has "no more waist than the continent of Africa,"— but with caps and long skirts they made admirable infants, creeping in the most orthodox fashion. Of course their prominent eyes and wide mouths left something to be desired; but these were very dear children, over whose mysterious disappearance their adoptive mother grieved exceedingly. Could it be that snakes — but no! The suggestion is too awful!

My aunt had a warm affection for a kinswoman who lived seven or eight miles from us. This lady's gentleness and sweetness made her a welcome visitor, and I never tired of hearing her talk, albeit her manner was tinged with sadness. She grieved over the disappearance, years before, of a dear young brother. He had simply dropped out of sight — her "poor Brother Ben!" This was a great mystery which she often discussed with my aunt, and which delightfully stirred my imagination.

One night late in summer a cold storm of rain and wind howled without and beat against the window-panes. A fire was kindled on the hearth, and around it the family gathered for a cosey evening. Suddenly some one saw a face pressed against the window, and hastened to open the door to the benighted visitor. There, dripping upon the threshold, stood a wretched-looking man. It was Brother Ben!

He carried a bundle of blankets on his back which he proceeded to unwind, revealing at last two tiny Indian girls! The frightened little creatures clung to him closely, and only after being brought to the fire and fed on warm milk were sufficiently reassured to permit him to explain himself. With one on each knee, "Brother Ben" told his story. He had run away to escape the restraints of home and had found his way to the wild Western country beyond the Ohio. Friendly Indians had sheltered and succored him, and he had finally married a young daughter of their chief. When his children were born, he "came to himself." He could not endure the prospect of rearing them among savages, and so had stolen them from their mother's wigwam during her temporary absence, and was well on his way before his theft was discovered. For days and nights he was in the wilderness, fording rivers, climbing mountains, hiding under the bushes at night. Finally he overtook a party of homeward-bound huntsmen, and in their company succeeded in reaching his sister's door.

I never knew what became of him, but the children were adopted by their aunt as her own. They were queer little round creatures, knowing no word of English, but affectionate and docile. I was much with them, delighting to teach them. I cared no more for Gabriella nor my rabbits and frogs. I thought no more of fairies and midnight apparitions. Here was food enough for imagination, different from anything I had ever dreamed of, — romance brought to my very door.

Without doubt the Indian mother, far away towards the setting sun, wept for her babes, but nobody, excepting myself, seemed to think of her. Could I write to her? Could I, some day, find a huntsman going westward and send her a message? She might even come to them! Some dark night I might see her dusky face pressed against the window-pane, peering in!

As time wore on, the children grew to be great girls, and their Indian peculiarities of feature and coloring became so pronounced that they were constantly wounded by being mistaken for mulattoes. There was no school in Virginia where they could be happy. No lady would willingly allow her little girls to associate with them. Evidently there was no future for them in Virginia. Finally their aunt found through our Quaker friends an excellent school, I think in Ohio, and thither the little wanderers were sent, were kindly treated, were educated, and grew up to be good women who married well.

My aunt made many long journeys — across the state to the White Sulphur Springs of which I remember nothing but crowds and discomfort — to Amherst, where my father lived, to Charlotte to visit my grandfather, and to Albemarle to visit friends among the mountains. She joined house-parties for a few weeks every summer; and one of these I, then a very little child, can perfectly recollect.

The country house, like all Virginia houses, was built of elastic material capable of sheltering any number of guests, many of whom remained all summer. Indeed, this was expected when a visit was promised. "My dear sir," said the master of Westover to a departing guest who had sought shelter from a rain-storm, "My dear sir, do stay and pay us a visit."

The guest pleaded business that forbade his compliance. "Well, well," said Major Drewry, "if you can't pay us a visit, come for two or three weeks at least."

"Week ends" were unknown in Virginia, and equally out of the question an invitation limited by the host to prescribed days and hours. Sometimes a happy guest would ignore time altogether and stay along from season to season. I cannot remember a parallel case to that of Isaac Watts, who, invited by Sir Thomas Abney to spend a night at Stoke Newington, accepted with great cheerfulness and staid twenty years, but I do remember that an invitation for one night brought to a member of our family a pleasant couple who remained four years. Virginia was excelled, it seems, by the mother country.

At this my first house-party there were many young people — among them the famous beauty, Anne Carmichael, and the then famous poet and novelist, Jane Lomax. These, with a number of bright young men, made a gay party. Every moonlight night it was the custom to bring the horses to the door-steps, and all would mount and go off for a visit to some neighbor. I was told, however, that the object of these nocturnal rides was to enable Miss Lomax to write poetry on the moon, and I was sorely perplexed as to the possibility, without the longest kind of a pen, of accomplishing such a feat. I spent hours reasoning out the problem, and had finally almost brought myself to the point of consulting the young lady herself, — although I distinctly thought there was something mysterious and uncanny about her, — when something occurred which strained relations between her and myself.

An uninteresting bachelor from town had appeared on the scene, to the chagrin of the young people, whose circle was complete without him. He belonged to the class representing in that day the present-day "little brothers of the rich," often the most agreeable relations the rich can boast, but in this case decidedly the reverse.

It was thought that the present intruder was "looking for a wife," — he had been known to descend upon other house-parties without an invitation, — and it was deliberately determined to give him the most frigid of cold shoulders. Our amiable hostess, however, emphatically put a stop to this. I learned the state of things and resented it. "Old True," as he was irreverently nicknamed, was a friend of mine. I resolved to devote myself to him, and to espouse his cause against his enemies.

One day when the young ladies were together in my aunt's room there was great merriment over the situation in regard to "old True," and many jests to his disadvantage related and laughed over. To my great delight Miss Lomax presently announced: "Now, girls, this is all nonsense! Mr. Trueheart is a favorite of mine. I shall certainly accept him if he asks me."

I believed her literally. I saw daylight for my injured friend, and immediately set forth to find him. He was sitting alone under the trees, on the lawn, and welcomed the little girl tripping over the grass to keep him company. On his knee I eagerly gave him my delightful news, and saw his face illumined by it. I was perfectly happy — and so, he assured me, was he!

That evening my aunt observed an unwonted excitement in my face and manner — and after feeling my pulse and hot cheeks decided I was better off in bed, and sent me to my room, which happened to be in a distant part of the house. To reach it I had to go through a long, narrow, dark hall. I always traversed this hall at night with bated breath. Tiny doors were let into the wall near the floor, opening into small apertures then known by the obsolescent name of "cuddies." I was afraid to pass them. So far from the family, nobody would hear me if I screamed. Suppose something were to jump out at me from those cuddies!

In the middle of this fearsome place I heard quick steps behind. Before I could run or scream, strong fingers gripped my shoulders and shook me, and a fierce whisper hissed in my ear — "*You little devil!*"

It was the poetess — the lady who wrote verses on the moon! "Old True" had suffered no grass to grow under his feet!

He left early next morning and so did we — my aunt perceiving that the excitement of the gay house-party was not good for me.

I learned there were other things besides hot roast apples to be avoided. Fingers might be burned by meddling with people's love affairs.

We were not the only guests who left the hospitable, gay, noisy, sleep-forbidding house. Our host had an eccentric sister whom we all addressed as "Cousin Betsey Michie," and who had left her own home expressly to spend a few weeks here with my aunt, to whom she was much attached. When "Cousin Betsey" discovered our intended departure, she ordered her maid "Liddy" to pack her trunk, — a little nail-studded box covered with goatskin, — and insisted upon claiming us as her guests for the rest of the season.

"Cousin Betsey" was to me a terrible old lady, — large, masculine, "hard-favored," and with a wart on her chin. I wondered what I should do, were she ever to kiss me, — which she never did, — and had made up my mind to keep away from her as far as possible. I owed her nothing, I reasoned, as she was not really my cousin. She used strong language, and was intolerant of all the singing, dancing, and midnight rides of the young people. Her room was immediately beneath mine. But the night before, lying awake after my startling interview with the poetess, I had heard the galloping horses of the party returning from a midnight visit to "Edgeworth," and the harsh voice of Cousin Betsey calling to her sister: "Maria, Maria! Don't you dare get out of bed to give those scamps supper — a passel of ramfisticated villians, cavorting all over the country like wild Indians."

A peal of musical laughter, and "Oh, Cousin Betsey!" was the answer of a merry horsewoman below.

As we heard much about Johnsonian English from Cousin Betsey, it was reasonable to suppose, my aunt thought, that the startling word was classic.

One evening while we were her guests she suddenly asked if I could write. I was about to give her an indignant affirmative, when my aunt interrupted, "Not very well." She knew I should be pressed into service as a secretary.

"She ought to learn," said Cousin Betsey. "My own writing is more like Greek than English since my eyes fail me. Maria Gordon has been copying for me, but such fantastic flourishes! It will be Greek copied into Sanskrit if *she* does it. Well, what can the child do? Come here, miss. Are your hands clean? Ah! Wash them again, honey; you must help Liddy make the Fuller's pies for my dinner-party to-morrow."

I was aghast! But I found the "Fuller's pies" were quite within my powers. "Pie" was not the American institution, but the bird supposed to hide itself in its nest. "*Je m'en vay chercher un grand peut-estre. Il est au nid de la pie,*" says Rabelais. As to my hands — I feel persuaded that Cousin Betsey's guests would have been reassured could they have known to a certainty the old lady had not prepared them with her own! A glass bowl was placed before me forthwith, — a bowl of boiling water, some almonds and raisins. "Liddy" blanched the almonds in the hot water and instructed me to press each one neatly into a large raisin, which, puffing out around the nut, made it resemble an acorn, or, to the instructed, a nest. These were the "pies" (birds in a nest), and very attractive they were, piled in the quaint old bowl with its fine diamond cutting. As to the "Fuller" thus immortalized, I looked him up, furtively, in the great Johnson's Dictionary which lay in solitary grandeur upon a table in the old lady's bedroom. Finding him unsatisfactory, I concluded Dr. Johnson was not, after all, the great man Cousin Betsey would have me believe. She quoted him on all occasions as authority upon all subjects. Boswell's Life of him, "Rasselas," "The Journey to the Hebrides," and "The Rambler" held places of honor upon the shelves of her small bookcase. "Read these, child," she reiterated, "and you need read nothing else. They will teach you to speak and write *English*, — you need no other language, — and everything else you need know except sewing and cooking." I soon became interested in her own literary work. She was, at the moment, engaged in writing a novel, "Some Fact and Some Fiction," which was to appear serially in the *Southern Literary Messenger*. I listened "with all my ears" to her talk concerning it with my aunt. It was to be a satire upon the affectations of the day — especially upon certain innovations in dress and custom brought by her cousin "Judy," the accomplished wife of our late Minister to France, Mr. Rives, and transplanted upon the soil of Albemarle County; also the introduction of Italian words to music in place of good old English. The heroine was exquisitely simple, her muslin gown clasped with a modest pearl brooch and a rose-geranium leaf. Her language was fine Johnsonian English — a sort of vitalized "Lucilla," like the heroine in Miss Hannah More's "Cœlebs." As to the Italian words for music, I blithely committed to memory this sarcastic travesty, sung for me in Cousin Betsey's sonorous contralto: —

The Frog he did a'courting ride,
  Rigdum bulamitty kimo —
With sword and buckler by his side —
  Rigdum bulamitty kimo.

(*Chorus*)

Kimo naro, delta karo!
Kimo naro, kimo!
Strim stram promedidle larabob rig
Rigdum bulamitty kimo!

This was deemed a clever satire on the unintelligible Italian words of recent songs, and ran through several verses, describing the Frog's courtship of Mistress Mouse, who seems to have been a fair lady with domestic habits who lived in a mill and was occupied with her spinning.

I was full of anticipation on the great day of the dinner-party. Mrs. Rives, Ella Page her niece, and little Amélie Rives — named for her godmother the queen of France — were the only invited guests. The house was spick and span. I filled a bowl with damask roses from the garden, sparing the microphylla clusters that hung so prettily over the front porch. The dinner was to be at two o'clock.

A few minutes before two a sable horseman galloped up to the door, dismounted, and, scraping his foot backward as he bared a head covered with gray wool, presented a note which my aunt read aloud: —

"CASTLE HILL, Wednesday noon.

"DEAR COUSIN BETSEY: — I know you will be amiable enough to pardon me when I tell you how *désolée* I am to find the hours have flown unheeded by, and we are too late for your dinner! The young ladies and I were reading Byron together, and you know how

"'Noiseless falls the foot of time
That only treads on flowers.'

I am sure you forgive us, and hope you will prove it by asking us again.

"Your affectionate cousin,

"JUDITH RIVES."

There was an ominous pause — and then the old dame said, in her sternest magisterial manner: —

"Tell Judy Rives to read Byron less — and Lord Chesterfield more." Turning to my aunt after the dignified old servitor had bowed himself out, she said, with fine scorn: "There's no use in telling *her* to read Dr. Samuel Johnson! '*Désolée*,' forsooth! — and 'the foot of time'! That sounds like that idiot, Tom Moore."

I had a very good time at Cousin Betsey's. I helped to pick the berries and gather the eggs from the nests in the privet hedge. Also for several days I had a steady diet of "Fuller's pies."

As to the novel, if it appeared at all it fell upon the public ear with a dull thud. Still, Cousin Betsey must have been, in her way, a great woman, for it was of her that Thomas Jefferson exclaimed, "God send she were a man, that I might make her Professor in my University."

CHAPTER V

SOMETHING akin to the tulip mania of Holland possessed the Southern country in the early thirties. The *Morus multicaulis*, upon the leaves of which the silkworm feeds, can be propagated from slips or cuttings. These cuttings commanded a fabulous price. To plant them was to lay a sure foundation for a great fortune.

My uncle visited Richmond at a time when the mania had reached fever-heat. Men hurried through the streets, with bundles of twigs under their arms, as if they were flying from an enemy. All over the city auction sales were held, and fortunes lost or gained — as they are to-day in Wall Street — with the fluctuations of the market. "I saw old Jerry White running with a bundle of sticks under his arm as if the devil were after him," said my uncle, — lazy, rheumatic old Jerry, who had not for years left his chimney corner in winter, or the bench upon which he basked like a lizard in summer, except to eat and sleep!

Long galleries, roofed with glass, were hastily erected all over the country, the last year's eggs of the *Bombyx mori* obtained at great price, and the freshly gathered leaves of the *Morus multicaulis* laid in readiness for their hatching.

My uncle ridiculed this madness, although as a physician it interested him.

"It does people good to stir them up," he declared. "It wakes up their livers and keeps them out of mischief. It is a fine tonic. They will need no bark and camomile while the fever lasts."

We made a pilgrimage to the distant farm of one of the maniacs. With my narrow skirts drawn closely around me, I tiptoed gingerly along the aisles dividing the long tables, and saw the hideous, grayish yellow, three-inch worms — each one armed with a rhinoceros-like horn on his head — devouring leaves for dear life. They had need for haste. Their time was short. Think of the millions of brave men and fair ladies who were waiting for the strong, shining threads it was their humble destiny to spin! Meanwhile, the lazy moths, their *raison d'être* having been accomplished, enjoyed in elegant leisure the evening of their days of beneficence. I saw the ease with which their spider-web thread was caught in hot water, and wound in balls as easily as I wound the wools for my aunt's knitting.

Nothing came of it all! In time all the *Morus multicaulis* was dug up, and good, sensible corn planted in its stead. Old Jerry found again his warm seat by the ingleside, where doubtless he

> "backward mused on wasted time,"

and many a better man than poor Jerry was stricken with amazement at his own folly. Does not *Morus* come from the Greek word for "fool"?

Next to his Bible and the Westminster Catechism, my uncle pinned his faith to the *Richmond Whig*. Henry Clay was his idol. To make Henry Clay

President of the United States was something to live for. When the great man passed through Virginia, all Hanover went to Richmond to do him honor, ourselves among the number. He was a son of Hanover, the "Mill boy of the Slashes." The old Mother of Presidents could, never fear, give yet another son to the country! No living man except Webster equalled him in all that the world holds essential to greatness — none was as dear to the mass of people. And yet neither could be elected to the post of Chief Magistrate of those adoring people!

Clay, at the time he visited Richmond, was confident he would win this honor. My uncle resolved I should see "the next President." A procession of citizens was to conduct him to a hall where a banquet awaited him. My uncle found a vacant doorstep on the line of march, and there we awaited the great man's coming. "Ah, there he comes!" exclaimed my uncle. "Look well, little girl! You may never again see the greatest man in the world." But to look was impossible. The crowd thronged us, and my uncle caught me to a vantage-ground on his shoulder. A tumbling sea of hats was all I could see! Presently a space appeared in the procession, and a tall man on the arm of another looked up with a rare smile to the small maiden, lifted his hat, and bowed to her! My uncle never allowed me to forget that one supreme moment in my child-life. To this day I cannot look at the fine bronze statuette of Henry Clay in my husband's library without a sensation born of the pride of that hour.

I am afraid the small maiden dearly loved glory!

Nobody would ever have guessed the ambitious little heart beating, the next winter, under the cherry merino; nor the conscious lips deep in her poke-bonnet that followed the prayers at church and implored mercy for a miserable sinner! For she had, during that glorious summer, another shining hour to remember. Those penitent lips had been kissed by a great man all the way from England — a man who had kissed the hand of a queen! She had a dim apprehension of virtue through the laying on of hands in church. What, then, might not come in the way of royal attribute from the laying on of lips!

Great thoughts like these so swelled my bosom that I was fain to reveal them to my little Quaker cousin at Shrubbery Hill. She received them gravely. "Oh, Sara Agnes," she ventured, "I am afraid thee is going to be one of the world's people!" All the same she had just dressed her doll Isabella in black silk, with a lace mantilla! The Princess Isabella, born, like myself, in 1830, was even then known as the future queen of Spain. It was an age of young queens.

Among the strangers from abroad who found their way to Virginia, none was more honored in Hanover than the Quaker author and philanthropist, Joseph John Gurney. He was the brother of Elizabeth Fry, who gave her life to the amelioration of the prison horrors of England.

My uncle entertained Dr. Gurney. The house was filled with guests to its utmost capacity. A picture of the long dining-tables rises before me — the gold-and-white best service, the flowers — and the sweetest flower of all, my young aunt. She was tall and graceful and very beautiful, — with large gray eyes, dark curls framing her face, delicate features, a lovely smile! She wore a narrow gown of pearl silk, the "surplice" waist belted high, and sleeves distended at the top by means of feather cushions tied in the armholes. I remember my uncle ordered the dinner to be served quietly and in a leisurely manner. "These Englishmen eat deliberately," he said. "Only Americans bolt their food."

In the evening, after the dinner company had left, a small party gathered around the astral lamp in the parlor, and Dr. Gurney drew forth his scrapbook and pencils, and began, as he talked, to retouch sketches he had made during his journey. The parlor was simply furnished. The Virginian of that day seemed to attach small importance to the style of his furniture. His chief pride was in his table, his fine wines, his horses and equipage, and the perfect comfort he could give his guests. There was no bric-a-brac, there were no pictures or brackets on the wall. "I have now," said an artist to me, "seen everything hung on American walls except buckwheat cakes! I have seen the plate in which they were served."

This parlor at Cedar Grove admitted but one picture — a fine copy over the mantel of the School of Athens, which my cousin Charles had brought as a present for my aunt, when he last returned from abroad. She was not responsible for the taste of this inherited home, which she had not tenanted very long. The walls of the parlor were papered with a wonderful representation of a Venetian scene — printed at intervals of perhaps four or more feet. There was a castle with turrets and battlements; and a marble stair, flanked with roses in pots, descending into the water. Down this stair came the most adorable creature in the world, — roses on her brocade gown, roses on her broad hat, — and at the foot of the stair a cavalier, also adorable, extended his hand to conduct her to the gondola in waiting. In the distance were more castles, more sea, more gondolas.

In this room the distinguished stranger met the company convened in his honor. If he gasped or shuddered at the ornate walls, he gave no sign. The little girl on the ottoman in the chimney corner, permitted to sit up late because of the rare occasion, listened with wide eyes to conversation she could not understand. Weighty matters were discussed, — for all the world was alive to the question which had to be met later, — the possibility of freeing the slaves under the present constitutional laws. This was a small gathering of the wise men of our neighborhood — come to consult a wise man from the country that had met and solved a similar problem. Perhaps all of these men had, like my uncle, given freedom to inherited slaves.

Presently I found myself, as I half dreamed in the corner, caught up by strong arms to the bosom of the great man himself. Bending over the sleepy head, he whispered a strange story — how that, far away across the seas, there was once a little girl "just like you" who loved her play, and loved to sit up and hear grown people talk—how a lady came to her one day and said, "My child, you must study and learn to deny yourself much pleasure, for soon you will be the queen of England"—how the little girl neither laughed nor cried, but said, "I will be good"—how time had gone on, and she had kept her promise and was now grown up to be a lovely lady; and sure enough, just a little while ago had been crowned queen—and how everybody was glad, because they knew, as she had been a good child, she would be a good queen.

That was a long time ago. Many things have happened and been forgotten since then; the Venetian lady and her cavalier have sailed away in unknown seas; the good Englishman has long since gone to his rest; the queen has won, God grant, an immortal crown, having lived to be old, never forgetting all along her life her promise; and the little girl has lived to be old, too! She has dreamed many dreams, but none more beautiful than the one she probably dreamed that night,—all roses and castles and gondolas, and a gracious young queen lovelier than all the rest.

Thus passed the first eight years of my life. Compared with those that followed, they were years of absolute serenity and happiness. They were not gay. This was the time when people who "feared God and desired to save their souls" felt bound to forsake the Established Church, many of whose clergy had become objects of disgust rather than of reverence. Dissenters and Quakers lived all around us; my uncle and aunt were Presbyterians, and I heard little but sober talk in my early years. Sometimes we attended the silent meetings of the Quakers, and sometimes old St. Martin's, to which many of our Episcopal friends belonged. Extreme asceticism, however, was as far from the temper of my aunt and uncle as was the extreme of dissipation. They were strict in the observance of the Sabbath and of all religious duties. Temperance in speech and living, moderation, serenity, — these ruled the life at Cedar Grove.

And so, although I cannot claim that

> "There was a star that danced,
> And under it I was born,"

I look back with gratitude unspeakable to a beautiful childhood, and bless the memory of those who suffered no "shapes of ill to hover near it," and mar its perfect innocence.

CHAPTER VI

WHEN it was found that a refined and intelligent society was inclined to crystallize around the court green of Albemarle County, it became imperative to choose a fitting name for a promising young village.

In 1761 there was a charming princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; intelligent, amiable, and only seventeen years of age. She had stepped forth from the conventional ranks of the young noblewomen of her day, and written a spirited letter to Frederick the Great, in which she entreated him to stop the ravages of war then desolating the German States. She had painted in vivid colors the miseries resulting from the brutality of the Prussian soldiery.

It appears that this letter reached the eyes of the Prince of Wales. He fell in love with the letter before he ever knew the writer. In the same year that he, as George III, ascended the throne of England, the lovely Charlotte, Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, became his wife. Charlottesville, then, was a name of happy omen for the pretty little town, and in three more years a county was created, it would seem, expressly that it might be called "Mecklenburg," and yet again a slice taken from another county to form the county of Charlotte.

The colony of Virginia was strewn thickly with the names of royal England: King and Queen, Charles City, — Charlestown, — King George, King William, William and Mary, Prince Edward, Princess Anne, Caroline, Prince George, Henrico, Prince William. No less than four rivers were named in honor of the good Queen Anne: Rapidan, North Anna, South Anna, Rivanna. We might almost call the roll of the House of Lords from a list of Virginia counties.

Twenty-four years after the Princess Charlotte had become a queen, Mrs. Abigail Adams, as our minister's wife, was presented at the Court of St. James. Alas for time, — and perhaps for prejudice, — she found, in place of the charming princess, an "embarrassed woman, not well-shaped nor handsome, although bravely attired in purple and silver." The interview was cold and stilted, but all the "embarrassment" was on the part of royalty. There had been a recent unpleasantness between John Bull and Brother Jonathan; King George, however, brave Briton as he was, broke the ice, and startled Mrs. Adams by giving her a hearty kiss! She could not venture, however, to remind the queen that we had named counties in her honor. She might, in her present state of mind, have deemed it an impertinence on our part.

I am so impatient under descriptions of scenery, that I do not like to inflict them upon others. But I wish I could stand with my reader upon the elliptic plain formed by cutting down the apex of Monticello. He would, I am sure, appreciate the

Residence of Dr. S. P. Hargrave.

fascination of mountain, valley, and river which drew the first settlers, and later the Randolphs, Gilmers, William Wirt, and Thomas Jefferson, to the region around Charlottesville. On the east the almost level scene is bounded by the horizon, and on the west the land seems to billow onward, wave after wave, until it rises in the noble crests of the Blue Ridge Mountains. A mist of green at our feet is pierced here and there by the simple belfries of the village churches, and a little farther on, glimpses appear of the classic Pantheon and long colonnades of the University of Virginia. Imagination may fill in this picture, but reality will far exceed imagination, especially if the happy moment is caught at sunset when the mountains change color, from rose through delicate shadings to amethyst, and finally paint themselves deep blue against the evening sky. Then, should that sky chance to be veiled with light, fleecy clouds all flame and gold — but I forbear!

This was the spot chosen by my aunt as the very best for my education and my social life. The town was small in the forties, indeed, is not yet a city. It is described at that time as having four churches, two book-stores, several dry-goods stores, and a female seminary. The family of Governor Gilmer lived on one of the little hills, Mr. Valentine Southall on another, and we were fortunate enough to secure a third, with a glorious view of the mountains and with grounds terraced to the foot of the hill. Large gardens, grounds, and ornamental trees surrounded all the houses. The best of these were of plain brick of uniform unpretentious architecture, comfortable, and ample. A small brick building at the foot of our lawn was my uncle's office, and behind it, on my tenth birthday, he made me plant a tree.

The "Female Seminary" had been really the magnet that drew my dear aunt. It was a famous school, presided over by an excellent and much-loved Presbyterian clergyman. There it was supposed I should learn everything my aunt could not teach me.

Behold me, then, on a crisp October morning wending my way to the great brick hive for girls. I was going with my aunt to be examined for admission. Her thoughts were, doubtless, anxious enough about the creditable showing I should make. Mine were anxious, too. I was conscious of a linen bretelle apron under my pelisse, and my mind was far from clear about the propriety of so juvenile a garment. Suppose no other girl wore bretelle aprons!

However, when we marched up the broad brick-paved walk and ascended the steps of the great building, whose many windows seemed to stare at us like lidless eyes, bretelle aprons sank into insignificance.

The room into which we were ushered seemed to be filled with hundreds of girls, and the Reverend Doctor's desk on a platform towered over them. He was most affable and kind. The examination lasted only a few minutes, a list of books was given me, and a desk immediately in front of the principal assigned me. Books were borrowed from some other girl, the lessons for the next day pointed out, and my school life began.

Remember, I had not yet planted my tenth birthday tree. These were the books deemed suitable for my age,—Abercrombie's "Intellectual Philosophy," Watts on the "Improvement of the Mind," Goldsmith's "History of Greece," and somebody's Natural Philosophy.

I worked hard on these subjects with the result that, as I could not understand them, I learned by rote a few words in answer to the questions. A bright, amiable little scrap of a girl, who always knew her lessons, volunteered to assist me. If any collector of old books should happen to find a volume of Watts on the Mind, much thumbed, and blotted here and there with tears, and should see within the early pages pencilled brackets enclosing the briefest possible answer to the questions, that book, those tears, were mine; and the brackets are the loving marks made by Margaret Wolfe, whose memory I ever cherish.

"What is Logic?" questions the teacher's guide at the bottom of the pages.

"Logic," answers Dr. Watts (in conspicuous pencilled brackets), "is the art of investigating and communicating Truth."

I had been struggling with Dr. Watts, Abercrombie, *et al.*, for several months, when my aunt reluctantly realized that, however admirable the school might be for others, I was not improving in mind or health. As soon as she arrived at this conclusion, she decided to experiment with no more large female seminaries, but to educate me, as best she could, at home.

At the same time I know that my dear aunt suffered from the overthrow of all her plans for my education. She had, for my sake, made great sacrifices in leaving her inherited home. These sacrifices were all for naught. She must have felt keen disappointment, and regret at the loss, toil, expense, — and, above all, my worse than wasted time.

Yet, after all, my time at school may not have been utterly thrown away! The experience may have borne fruit that I know not of. Moreover, I *had* learned something! I learned that Logic is the art of investigating and communicating Truth!

CHAPTER VII

MASTERS were found in a preparatory school for my home education. Happy to escape from the schoolroom, I worked as never maiden worked before, loving my summer desk in the apple tree in the garden, loving my winter desk beside the blazing wood in my uncle's office, passionately loving my music, and interested in the other studies assigned me. With no competitive examinations to stimulate me, I yet made good progress. Before I reached my thirteenth year, I had learned to read French easily. I had wept over the tender story of Picciola and the sorrows of Paul and Virginia. I had sailed with Ulysses and trod the flowery fields with Calypso. My aunt had beguiled me into a course of history by allowing me as reward those romances of Walter Scott which are founded on historical events. My love of music and desire to excel in it made me patient under the eccentric itinerant music teacher, the one pioneer apostle of classic music in all Virginia, who was known, more than once, to arrive at midnight and call me up for my lesson; and who, while other maidens were playing the "Battle of Prague" and "Bonaparte crossing the Rhine," or singing the campaign songs of the hero of the log cabin, taught me to love Beethoven and Liszt, and to discern the answering voices in that genius, then young, whose magic music fell not then, nor ever after, upon unheeding ears. I had read with my aunt selections all the way from "The Faerie Queene" through the times of later queens, — Elizabeth and Anne, — and had made a beginning with the queen for whom I had a sentiment, and who has given her name to so fair an age of fancy and of elegant writing. Alas, for the mental training I might have had through the study of mathematics! Were it not that the lack of this training must be apparent to all who are kind enough to listen to my story, I might quote Joseph Jefferson, as Mr. William Winter reports him: "Why, look at me! I seem to have managed pretty well, but I couldn't for the life of me add up a column of figures." The only figures I know anything about are figures of speech. Fortunately, I have had little use for addition. My knowledge has been quite sufficient for my needs.

My French teacher, Mr. Mertons, — a square-shouldered, spectacled German, with an upright shock of coarse black hair, literally pounded the French language into me. With a grammar held aloft in his left hand, he emphasized every rule with his right fist, coming down hard on my aunt's mahogany. If success is to be measured by results, I can only say that, although I perceived some charm in Mme. de Sévigné and in Dumas, I was rather dense with Racine and Molière; and as to the spoken language! I can usually manage to convey, by gesture and deliberate English, a twilight glimmer of my meaning in talking to a polite Frenchman, but blank darkness descends upon him when I speak to him in "a French not spoken in France." The gift for "divers kinds of tongues" was not bestowed upon me.

The music teacher deserves more than a passing notice. He was unique. Mr. William C. Rives found him somewhere in France, and promised him a large salary if he would come to America, live near or in Charlottesville, and teach his daughter Amélie. He was the incarnation of thriftlessness; with no polish of manner, no idea of business, or order, or of the necessity of paying a debt, but he was also the incarnation of music! My uncle again and again satisfied the sheriff and released him from bonds. Finally, he could not appear in town at all by daylight, and often arrived at midnight for my lesson. Gladly my aunt would rise and dress to preside over it. My teacher would disappear before the dawn. He owed money all over town which he had not the faintest intention of ever paying. More than once his defenceless back could have borne witness to a creditor's outraged feelings. But he was resourceful. Thereafter he carried all his music, a thick package, in a case sewed to the lining of his coat. His back, rather than his breast, needed a shield. It was amusing to see him pack himself up, as it were, before venturing into the open.

But with all this, we prized him above rubies. He was a brilliant pianist, a great genius; had studied with Liszt, early appreciated Chopin, adored Beethoven. One of his animated lessons would leave me in a state "which fiddle-strings is weakness to express my nerves," and yet no summons to duty ever thrilled me with pleasure like his "Koom on ze biahno." Once there, absolute fidelity to the composer's writing and the position of my hands exacted all my attention. The margins of my music were liberally adorned with illustrations of my fist — a clumsy bunch with an outsticking thumb.

I always felt keenly the charm of music, even when it was beyond my comprehension. One day, happening to look up from his own playing, he detected tears in my eyes. He was enraged in three languages. "Himmel! Zis is not bathétique! Zis is *scherzo!* Eh, bien! I blay him *adagio*." And under shut teeth a sibilant whisper sounded very much like "*imbécile*," as he hung his head to one side, arched his brows, and drawled out the theme in a ridiculous manner. Once I was so carried away by a delicious passage I was playing that I diminished the *tempo*, that the linked sweetness might be long drawn out. He literally danced! He beat time furiously with both hands. "Ach! is it *you* yourselluf, know bedder zan ze great maestro," and sweeping me from the piano stool he rendered the passage properly.

One summer my aunt, in order that I might have lessons, took board in a country place where he lived. I was pleasing myself one day with a little German song I had smuggled from town: —

"The church bells are ringing, the village is gay,
And Leila is dressed in her bridal array.
She's wooed, and she's won
By a proud Baron's son,
And Leila, Leila, Leila's a Lady!"

Proceeding gayly with the chorus, and exulting in Leila's ladyship and good fortune, I was startled by thunderous claps through the house. Mr. Meerbach was fleeing to his own room, slamming the doors between himself and my uneducated voice!

Of course he lost his scholars. At last only Amélie Rives, Jane Page, Eliza Meriwether, and myself remained. We had to make up his salary among us. "I hope you'll study, dear," said my kind uncle; "I am now giving eight dollars apiece for your lessons." Jane Page played magnificently. This rare young genius, a niece of Mrs. William C. Rives, died young. The rest of us played well, too. My teacher wished to take me to Richmond to play for Thalberg his own difficult, florid music, and was terribly chagrined at my aunt's refusal to permit me to go.

The little Episcopal church and rectory were just across the street, and the rector, Mr. Meade, allowed me free access to the gallery, where I delighted to practise on the small pipe organ. I was just tall enough to reach the foot notes. The church was peculiarly interesting from the fact that Thomas Jefferson, who is supposed to have been a free thinker, had insisted upon building it and had furnished the plans for it. Before it was built, services were held in the Court House, which Mr. Jefferson regularly attended, bringing his seat with him on horseback from Monticello, "it being," says Bishop Meade, "of some light machinery which, folded up, was carried under his arm and, unfolded, served for a seat on the floor of the Court House."

I was thirteen years old when Mr. Meade sent for me one evening to come to him in his vestry room. He told me that the Episcopal Convention was to meet in his church in two days, and he had just discovered that Miss Willy (the organist) had arranged an entire new service of chants and hymns. He had requested her not to use it, urging that his father the bishop, the clergy, and all his own people knew and loved the old tunes, and could not join in the new. Miss Willy had indignantly resented his interference and threatened to resign, with all her choir, unless he yielded. "I shall certainly not yield," said the rector. "I have told her that I know a little girl who will be glad to help me. Now I wish you to play for the convention, beginning day after to-morrow (Sunday), and every evening during its session. This will give you evening services all the week, beginning with three on Sunday. I will see that familiar hymns are selected, and you need chant none of the Psalms except the Benedictus and Gloria in Excelsis."

I began, "Oh, I'm afraid—" "No," said Mr. Meade, "you're not afraid; you are not going to be afraid. Just be in your place fifteen minutes before the time, and draw the curtain between you and the audience. I shall send you a good choir."

I practised with a will next day. On the great day, when I passed the sable giant, Ossian, pulling away at the rope under the belfry, and heard the solemn bell announcing that my hour had come, my heart sank within me. But Ossian gave me a glittering smile which showed all his magnificent ivories. He was grinning because he was going to pump the organ for such a slip of a lass as I!

On arriving at the organ gallery, I found my choir, — several ladies whom I knew, and a group of fine-looking students from the University. They looked down kindly on the small organist, with her hair hanging in two braids down her back. I resolutely kept that small back to the drawn curtain! Only the tip of one of Miss Willy's nodding plumes, and I should have been undone!

All went well. The singing was fine from half a dozen manly throats, supplementing two or three female voices and my own little pipe. I was soon lost to my surroundings in the enjoyment of my work. When, on the last day, the good bishop asked for the grand old hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," it thrilled my soul to hear the church fill with the triumphant singing of the congregation, led by little me and my improvised choir.

CHAPTER VIII

THE society of Charlottesville in the forties was composed of a few families of early residents and of the professors at the University. Governor Gilmer, Secretary of the Navy in Tyler's time, Mr. Valentine Southall of an old Virginia family, and himself eminent in his profession of the law, Dr. Charles Carter, Professor Tucker, William B. Rogers, Dr. McGuffey, Dr. Cabell, Professor Harrison, — all these names are well known and esteemed to this day. There were young people in these families, and all them were my friends. Along the road I have travelled for so many years I have met none superior to them and very few their equals.

My special coterie was a choice one. It included, among others, Lizzie Gilmer (the lovely) and her sisters; beautiful Lucy Southall; Maria Harrison and her sweet sister Mary, both accomplished in music and literature; Eliza Rives and Mary McGuffey. James Southall, William C. Rives, Jr., George Wythe Randolph, Jack Seddon, Kinsey Johns, Professor Schéle de Vere, John Randolph Tucker, St. George Tucker — these were habitués of my home, and all apparently interested in me and in my music. To each name I might append a list of honors won, at the bar, in literature, and in the army. I have survived them all — and I kept the friendship of each one as long as he lived.

The customs in entertaining differed from those in vogue at the present day. Afternoon teas, which had been fashionable during the Revolution — tea then being a rare luxury — had not survived until the forties. Choice Madeira in small glasses, and fruit-cake were offered to afternoon callers. The cake must always be *au naturel* if served in the daytime. Cake iced — in evening dress — was only permissible at the evening hour.

Dinner-parties demanded a large variety of dishes. They were not served *à la Russe.* Two table-cloths were *de rigueur* for a dinner company. One was removed with the dishes of meat, vegetables, celery, and many pickles, all of which had been placed at once upon the table. The cut-glass and silver dessert dishes rested on the finest damask the housewife could provide. This cloth removed, left the mahogany for the final walnuts and wine.

Three o'clock was a late hour for a dinner-party — the ordinary family dinner was at two. The large silver tureen, which is now enjoying a dignified old age on our sideboards, had then place at the foot of the table. After soup, boiled fish appeared at the head.

An interview has been preserved between a Washington hostess of the time and Henry, an "experienced and fashionable" caterer. Upon being required to furnish the smallest list of dishes possible for a "genteel" dinner-party of twelve persons, he reluctantly reduced his ménu to soup, fish, eight dishes of meat, stewed celery, spinach, salsify, and cauliflower. "Potatoes and beets would not be genteel." The meats were turkey, ham, partridges, mutton chops, sweetbreads, oyster pie, pheasants, and canvas-back ducks. "Plum-pudding," suggested the hostess. "La, no, ma'am! All kinds of puddings and pies are out of fashion." "What, then, can I have at the head and foot of the table?" asked the hostess. "Forms of ice-cream at the head, and at the foot a handsome pyramid of fruit. Side dishes, jellies, custards, blanc-mange, cakes, sweetmeats, and sugar-plums." "No nuts, raisins, figs?" "Oh, *no*, *no*, ma'am, they are *quite* vulgar!"

For the informal supper-parties, to which my aunt was wont to invite the governor and Mrs. Gilmer, Mr. and Mrs. Southall, Professor and Mrs. Tucker, the table was amply furnished with cold tongue, ham, broiled chickens or partridges, and pickled oysters, hot waffles, rolls and muffins, very thin wheaten wafers, green sweetmeats, preserved peaches, brandied peaches, cake, tea, and coffee; and in summer the fruits of the season. These suppers made a brave showing with the Sheffield candelabra and bowls of roses. Ten years later these "high teas" were quite out of fashion, and would, by a modern "fashionable caterer," be condemned as "vulgar." There was a crusade against all card-playing and dancing. The pendulum was swinging far back from an earlier time when the punch-bowl and cards ruled the evening, and the dancing master held long sessions, travelling from house to house. To have a regular dancing party, with violins and cotillon, was like "driving a coach-and-six straight through the Ten Commandments!" My aunt, however, had the courage of her convictions, and allowed me small and early dances in our parlor, with only piano music. Old Jesse Scott lived at the foot of the hill — but to the length of introducing him and his violin we dared not go. As it was, after our first offence, a sermon was preached in the Presbyterian church against the vulgarity and sin of dancing. My aunt listened respectfully but continued the dance she deemed good for my health and spirits.

The noblest of men, and one of my uncle's dearest friends, was Thomas Walker Gilmer, Secretary of the Navy during Tyler's administration. He was killed on the Potomac by the bursting of a gun on trial for the first time. My uncle and aunt went immediately to Washington to bring him home. No man had ever been so loved and esteemed by all who knew him. I have never seen such grief, as the sorrow of his wife. She had been a brilliant member of the Washington society, noted for ready wit and repartee. Never, as long as she lived, did she reënter social life. With her orphaned children she lived on "The Hill" very near us. These children were a part of our family always.

As time went on, and we grew tall, — Lizzie and I, — students from the University found us out, and had permission to visit us. Lizzie, three years my senior, became engaged to St. George Tucker, one of our choice circle. When more visitors called on Lizzie than she could well entertain in an evening, it was her custom to send Susan, a little pet negress whom she had taught to read, running down the hill with, "Please, Miss Hargrave, please, ma'am, Miss Lizzie say she certn'ly will be glad if you let Miss Sara come up an' help 'er with her comp'ny." My aunt could never deny her anything. I was too young, much too young, but we took our lives very naturally and unconsciously, accepting a guest and doing our best for him, whether he was old or young. We were never announced as débutantes. No Rubicon flowed across our path, — on one side pinafores and long braids, on the other purple-and-fine-linen and elaborate coiffure, — the which if stepped across at an entertainment ushered us into society.

Lizzie and I felt that we were young hostesses, and took pains to be, according to our lights, ceremonious and conventional in our behavior. Some one or two of our guests was sure to be George Gordon, or James Southall, or "Jim" White, or "Sainty" Tucker, who were as brothers to us; and very watchful and strict were these boy chaperons! The great anxiety was lest our visitors should stay too late. So my aunt and Mrs. Gilmer carefully timed the burning of a candle until ten o'clock, and all candles thereafter were cut that length. When they began to flicker in the sockets, good nights were expected.

Mrs. Gilmer's large house was divided in the middle by a hall extending to a door in the rear. On one side were the bedrooms of the family, on the other the parlors and dining-room. She spent her evenings in a darkened room, just across the hall from the parlor, and although she had not the heart to mingle with us, we knew she was near.

One night we had a number of guests, among them a stranger, Mr. Tebbs, brought by one of our own band who had introduced him and then left, Mr. Tebbs remarking that he too must soon leave, as a friend was down town waiting for him. The candles burned low, and we allowed long pauses in conversation, vainly hoping the stranger would depart. Presently the knocker sounded an alarum, and little Susan hurried from her mistress's room to answer it. We distinctly heard her announce, " Dish yer's a letter, Miss Ann," and Mrs. Gilmer's languid reply, "Light a candle and read it to me." We essayed to drown Susan's voice, for I was quite sure it was a peremptory order for me to come home, but it rang out clearly and deliberately, " Tebbs, you damn rascal! Are you going to stay at Mrs. Gilmer's all night!" To make matters worse, Susan immediately appeared with the note for the blushing Mr. Tebbs, who then and there bade us a long farewell. We never saw him more! A delicious little story was told with keen relish by Juliet, the fifteen-year-old daughter. She had, as she thought, " grown up," while her mother lived in seclusion, and had a boy-lover of her own. Sitting, after hours, one moonlight night on the veranda under her mother's window, the anxious youth was moved to seize the propitious moment and declare himself. Juliet wished to answer correctly, and dismiss him without wounding him. She assured him " Mamma would never consent.' A voice from within decided the matter: "Accept the young man, Juliet, if you want to — I've not the least objection — and let him run along home now. Be sure to bolt the door when you come in!" Evidently Mrs. Gilmer had small respect for boy-lovers; and wished to go to sleep.

The Gilmer home was full of treasures of books and pictures. We turned over the great pages of Hogarth and the illustrations of Shakespeare, very much to the damage of these valuable books. Choice old Madeira was kept in the cellar, to which we had free access, mixing it with whipped cream or mingling it with ice, sugar and nutmeg whenever we so listed. A great gilded frame rested against the wall, from which some large painting had been removed. Over this we stretched a netting and inaugurated *tableaux vivantes*, of which we never wearied. I was always Rowena, to whom Lizzie, as Rebecca the Jewess, gave her jewels. One of the Gilmer boys made an admirable Dr. Primrose, another Moses, whom we dressed for the fair, and the other children were flower girls, nuns, or pilgrims with staff and shell.

When one questions the possibility of this large family living for several years without a head and moving about decorously and systematically, we must not forget the family butler, Mandelbert, and his wife, Mammy Grace. Both were long past middle age. They simply assumed the care of their broken-hearted mistress and her children, ruling the house with patient wisdom and kindness. Mammy Grace, so well known fifty years ago in Virginia, was peculiar in her speech, retaining the imagery of her race and nothing of its dialect. She was straight and tall and always carefully dressed. She wore a dark, close-fitting gown, which she called a "habit," a handkerchief of plaid madras crossed upon her bosom, an ample checked apron, and a cap with a full mob crown like Martha Washington's. When she dropped her respectful "curtsey," her salutation, "Your servant, master," was less suggestive of deference than of dignified self-respect. Her one fault was that, like her mistress, she never knew when the children were grown. This was sometimes embarrassing. As surely as 8 o'clock Saturday night came, one after the other would be called from the parlor, and would obey instantly, for fear she would add more than a hint of the thorough, personally superintended bath which awaited each one.

Mandelbert was superb, tall, gray, and very stately. He had been born and trained in the family, a model, *distingué*-looking servant. Mammy Grace lived to an honored old age, but a liberal use of fine old Madeira proved the reverse of the modern lacteal remedy for old age. In a few years there was no more wine in the cellar — and no more Mandelbert.

The grandmother of the Gilmer children was Mrs. Ann Baker, a lovely old lady who wore a Letitia Ramolino turban, with little curls sewn within its brim. She had been a passenger on James Rumsey's boat in 1786 at Shepherdstown, when he was the first to succeed by steam alone in propelling a vessel against the current of the Potomac, and "at the rate of four or five miles an hour!" She was a lovely, cultivated old lady, the widow of a distinguished man. I cannot be quite sure, — all witnesses are gone, — but I have a distinct impression I was told that General Washington was a passenger with Mrs. Baker on James Rumsey's boat.

CHAPTER IX

THE year after my fifteenth birthday was destined to be an eventful one to me. In May of that year I wrote a letter to my aunt, Mrs. Izard Bacon Rice, who lived at "The Oaks" in Charlotte County. This letter, the earliest extant of my girlhood, has recently been placed in my hands, and I venture to hope I may be pardoned for inserting the naïve production here; not for any intrinsic merit, but because of the light it reflects upon my development and associations at the age of fifteen,—a light not to be acquired by mere recollection, as a photograph of the person must be more lifelike than a sketch from memory.

"CHARLOTTESVILLE, May 25, 1845.

"MY DEAR AUNT: I think that I have fully tested the truth of the old saying, viz. 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,' for I have hoped and hoped in vain for an answer to my last letter, and since it does not make its appearance, I write to request an explanation.

"I received a letter from Willie (Carrington) this morning, and was rejoiced to hear that you still intend coming to Charlottesville 'some of these times,' and that she thinks of coming also. I am overjoyed at the idea of seeing my *dear* little Henry, and Tom in a few weeks. Willie says that Henry is *beautiful*, and that Tom has become quite a famous beau, improved wonderfully in gallantry, etc. I anticipate a great many long, pleasant walks with him, though I am afraid he will not like Charlottesville, as he will find no rabbits' tracks or partridges here. I hope you will come the first of June and stay a long while with us.

"Aunt Mary has been very unwell for a long time, but I am in hopes that she is getting a little better. I think your visit will improve her wonderfully. We are all as busy as we can be: aunt and uncle in the garden and yard, and I studying my French lessons, sewing, reading, and housekeeping for Aunt Mary when she is sick. I am very disconsolate at the thought of losing my most intimate friend (Lizzie Gilmer) for a few months. She is going to Staunton, and I expect to miss her very much. We have a very quiet time now — as most of my acquaintances were *sent off* at the late disturbances at the University, and I can study, undisturbed by company. I scarcely visit any one except Lizzy, and receive more visits from her than any one else, as she comes *every* day, and frequently two or three times a day. I am going to spend my last evening with her this evening, as she leaves to-morrow. I am very sorry that Willie will not see her, as I know they would like each other.

"Who do you think I have had a visit from? No less a personage than Dr. Schéle de Vere, professor of modern languages at the University. He has called on me *twice*, but I, unfortunately, was not at home once when he called. He is a German (one of the nobility), and speaks our language shockingly, and is such an incessant *chatterer* that he gives *me* no possible chance of wedging in a syllable. He walked with me from church last Sunday, and jabbered incessantly, much to the amusement of the congregation in general, but particularly of two little boys who walked behind us. When he parted with us, he asked uncle's permission to visit us, which was granted; and he seemed *very* grateful, and said he 'would have de pleasure den of sharing de doctor's hospitality and hearing some of Miss

Rice's fine music.' But what mortifies me beyond measure is that he treats me as a *little child*, and inquires *most affectionately* about my progress in music, etc. He is not so much older than I am, either, as he is only twenty-one, so *I* think he might be more respectful in his demeanor. What do you think of it all? He plays very well on the piano, and has heard the best performers in Europe, so I feel very reluctant to play for him. The first time he heard me play, he wanted to applaud me as they do at concerts, but he was checked by one of the company, who intimated to him that it was not customary in this country, so he contented himself with clapping his hands several times.

"I have neither time nor paper for much more, so good-by. Aunt Mary joins me in love and a kiss to all grandfather's household and to Tom, Henry, and Uncle Izard.

"Yours affectionately,
"SARA A. RICE.

"P.S. I send my best respects to Lethe, Viny, and Aunt Chany, and my love to all the ducks, geese, chickens, turkeys, and Tom's dogs.

"Yours affectionately,
"SARA A. RICE."

This sixty-four-year-old letter was beautifully written with a quill pen, clear and distinct without an erasure, blotted with sand from a perforated box, without envelope, and sealed with wax. Written in figures upon the envelope was "Uncle Sam's" receipt for prepaid postage, $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents, no stamps having then been issued by him.

Fanciful seals and motto wafers were in high favor among romantic young people. "L'amitié c'est l'amour sans ailes" was a prime favorite; also a maiden in a shallop looking upward to a star, the legend "Si je te perds je suis perdu." The most delicate refusal to a lover on record was the lady's card, "With thanks," sealed with a bird in flight and "Liberty is sweet!"

The "disturbances of late," for which my friends were "suspended for a month," were not of a serious nature. They were only the midnight pranks of mischievous boys, such as hyphenating the livery-stable's name "Le Tellier" to read "Letel-Liar," drawing his "hacks" to the doors of the citizens, placing the undertaker's sign over the physician's office, driving Mr. Schéle's ponies, and leaving on their flanks the painted words "So far for to-day," the phrase with which he invariably ended his lectures. It remained later for the student in whom I was most interested to excel them all. He drove a flock of sheep one dark night up the rotunda stairs to the platform on the roof, and then shut down the trap-door. A plaintive good-morning-bleating welcomed faculty and students next day. Needless to say, the valiant shepherd was "suspended."

Late in the summer of this year another large convention of clergymen, Presbyterian this time, was held at Charlottesville. No good hotel could be found anywhere in Virginia. The landlord was ruined by the hospitality of the citizens. As soon as a pleasant stranger "put up" at a public house, he was claimed as a guest by the first man who could reach him.

When large religious or political or literary meetings convened in our town, my uncle would send to the chairman asking for the number of guests we could entertain. Until they arrived, we were as much on the *qui vive* as if we had bought numbers in a lottery.

On this occasion, Lizzie and I were in great grief. She had been away from town for two months, and was now to make me a long visit. We had made plans for a lovely week. Now the house would be filled with clergymen,—no music, no visitors (and Lizzie was engaged), no "fun"! My aunt sympathized with us, and fitted up a small room at the far end of the hall, moved in the piano and guitar, and bade us make ourselves at home.

We were seated at church behind a row of the grave and reverend seniors, when Dr. White leaned over our pew and said to one of them, "I'm glad to tell you I can send you to Dr. Hargrave's. He will take fine care of you."

"But," demurred the reverend gentleman, "I have my son with me."

"Take him along! There's plenty of room," replied the doctor.

Lizzie gave me a despairing glance. Now we *are* ruined, we thought. A dreadful small boy to be amused and kept out of mischief.

That afternoon we were condoling with each other in our little city of refuge, when the opening front door revealed among our guests a slender youth, who, upon being directed to his room, sprang up the stairs two or three steps at a time.

"Mercy!" said I. "Worse and worse! There's no hope for us! A strange young man to be entertained in our little parlor!"

My aunt entering just then, we confided our miseries to her. "Never mind, Lizzie," she said, "Sara shall keep him in the large room. She must bring down all her prettiest books and pictures and arrange a table in a corner for his amusement. He will not be here much of the time. He has to go to church with his father, you know."

The name of this unwelcome intruder was Roger A. Pryor. He made himself charming. I had not yet tucked up my long braids, but he treated me beautifully. He was so alert, so witty, so amiable, that he was unanimously voted the freedom of our sanctum. He entered with glee into our schemes for self-defence. Running out to a shrub on the lawn, he returned with a handful of "wax berries," gravely explained, "ammunition," and proceeded to test the range of the missile. Just then one of the enemy, the great Dr. Plumer, entered the hall, and the soft berry neatly reached his dignified nose. His Reverence gave no sign of intelligence. He had been a boy himself!

St. George Tucker took an immense fancy to our new ally. He found a great deal to say to me. How glad was I that my aunt had given me a new rose-colored silk bonnet from Mme. Viglini's.

The week passed like a dream. When the stage drew up at midnight to take our guest to the railroad, seven miles distant, we were both very *triste* at parting.

He was sixteen years old, was to graduate next summer at Hampden Sidney College, and come the session afterward to our University. I hoped all would go well with him; and after the winding horn of the stage was quite out of hearing, I,—well, I had been taught early to entreat the Father of all to take care of my friends. There could be no great harm in including him by name, nor yet in adding to my petition the words "*for me!*"

I suppose I may have seemed a bit *distrait* after this incident, for my uncle, who was always devising occupation for me, insisted upon my writing a story. I liked to please him, and I surprised him by producing a love story. I think I called it "The Birthnight Ball." I remember this quotation, which I considered quite delicate and suggestive:—

"The stars, with vain ambition, emulate her eyes."

That is all I remember of my story. My uncle sent it to the *Saturday Evening Post* in Philadelphia and it was accepted, the editor proposing, as I was a young writer, to waive the *honorarium!* I was only too glad to accept the honor.

In the autumn my uncle took us on a long journey to Niagara Falls and the Northern Lakes. In New York we stopped at the Astor House on Broadway, and my room looked into the park then opposite, where scarlet flamingoes gathered around a fountain. We walked in the beautiful Bowling Green Park, then the fashionable promenade, took tea with the Miss Bleeckers on Bleecker Street, and bought a lovely set of turquoises, a jewelled comb, and a white topaz brooch from Tiffany's. Moreover, my seat at table was near that of John Quincy Adams, now an aged man, paralytic, and almost incapable of conveying his food to his lips. He was charmingly cheerful, and courteous to a sweet-faced lady who attended him.

I think we took the canal-boat in Schenectady which was to convey us across the state of New York.

My uncle had been beguiled in New York by a flaming pictorial advertisement of palatial packet-boats, drawn by spirited horses galloping at full speed. When we entered our little craft, we found it so crowded that we were wretchedly uncomfortable. Possibly, in our ignorance, we had not taken the fine packet of the advertisement. Our own boat crawled along at a snail's pace, making three or four miles an hour. Many of the passengers left it every morning, preferring to walk ahead and wait for us until night. We made the journey in five or six days. The heat, the discomfort, the mosquitoes! Who can imagine the misery of that journey? Fresh from the mountains and gorgeous sunsets of Albemarle, we found little to admire in the scenery.

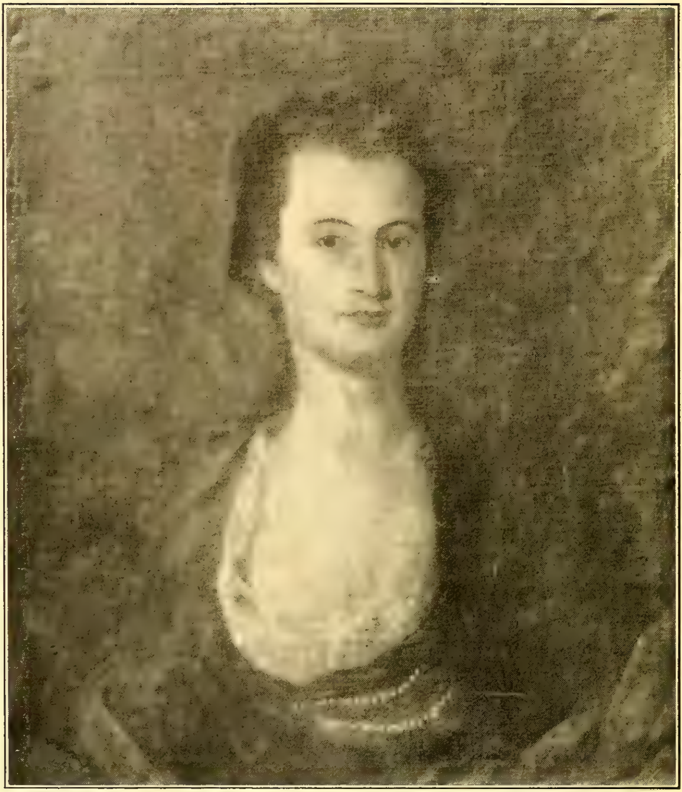
As to the Falls, which we had come so far to see —they and their *entourage* made me ill. It was all so weird and strange; the dark forests of evergreen, pine, and spruce; the sullen Indians, squatted around blankets, embroidering with beads and porcupine quills; the hapless little Indian babies strapped to boards and swinging in the trees, and over all, the heavy roar of the waters. The immensity of their power filled me with terror. I longed to get away from the awful spectacle.

The best part of a journey is the home-coming. The dear familiar house, — we never knew how good it was, — the welcome of affectionate, cheerful servants; the dogs beside themselves with joy, the perfect peace, leisure, relaxation! Flowers, fruit, and much accumulated mail awaited us. My keen eye detected a large-enveloped paper from Philadelphia, and my nimble fingers quickly abstracted it, unperceived, from the miscellaneous heap, and consigned it to a bureau drawer in my room, the key of which went into my pocket.

In the privacy of my bedtime hour — having bolted the door — I drew it forth. Oh, what inane foolishness! What sad trash! Tearing it into strips, I lighted each one at my candle and saw the whole burned — burned to impalpable smoke and degraded dust and ashes; consigned then and there to utter oblivion!

My uncle often wondered why the story had not appeared. There was a perilous moment when he threatened to write to the publishers, but I persuaded him to be patient and dignified about it, and the matter, after a while, was forgotten. Never was an uncle so managed by a young girl!

I think my great card with him was my interest in his office work. Physicians compounded and prepared their own prescriptions sixty-five years ago. He delighted in me when I donned my ample apron and, armed with scales and spatula, gravely assumed the airs of a physician's assistant. I knew all his professional manœuvres to satisfy hypochondriac old gentlemen and nervous old ladies. I learned to make the innocuous pills which "helped" them "so much," and the carminative for the aching little stom-



Mrs. Fanny Bland Randolph.

achs of the babies. Great have been the strides since then in the noblest of all professions!

Just here I venture to illustrate some of the radical changes in the practice of medicine by extracts from a letter written by Dr. Theodorick Bland to his sister, Fanny Bland Randolph. The letter is copied from the original in the possession of the late Joseph Bryan of Richmond, Virginia.

The treatment in 1840 differed in no material particular from that of 1771, when Dr. Bland prescribed — regretting the necessity of "absent treatment" — to his sister's husband, John Randolph, as follows: —

"I take Mr. Randolph's case to be a bilious intermittent, something of the inflammatory kind, which, had he been bled pretty plentifully in the beginning, would have intermitted perfectly; but unless his pulse is hard and, as it were, laboring and strong, I would not advise that he should now be bled; but if they are strong and his head-ache violent, and the weight of the stomach great, let him lose about six ounces of blood from the arm, and if he is much relieved from that, and his pulse rises and is full and strong after it, a little more may be taken. Let his body be kept open by Glysters, made with chicken water, molasses, decoction of marsh-mallows and manna, given once, twice or three times, — nay, even four times a day if occasion requires, and let him have manna and cream of tartar dissolved in Barley Water, — one ounce of manna and a half ounce of Cream of Tartar to every pint. Of this let him drink plentifully, but prior to this, after bleeding (should bleeding be necessary) let him take a vomit of Ipecac, four grains every half hour until he has four or five plentiful vomits, drinking plentifully of Camomile Tea (to three or four pints at intervals) to work it off. Should the pain in the head be violent and the eyes red and heavy, let his temples be cupped or leeches applied to his temples, which operation may be repeated every day, if he find relief from it, for two or three days. If the manna, Cream of Tartar and Glysters be not effectual, let him take fifteen grains of rhubarb and as many of Vitriolated Tartar, repeating the dose, twice or three times at six or eight hours intervals. Should he have any catching of the nerves, let one of the powders be given every four hours in a spoonful of jalop or pennyroyal water. Should he be delirious, sleepy, or dozing in a half kind of a sleep, his pulse small and quick, put blisters to his back, arms and legs, and leeches and cupping to his temples. If his skin should be hot, dry and parched after he has taken his vomit or before, let him be put in a tub of warm water with vinegar in it, up to his arm-pits and continue in it as long as he can bear it, first wetting his head therein. He may, now and then, drink a little claret-whey and have his tongue sponged with sage-tea, honey and vinegar. Dear Fanny, with sincere wishes for his safe and speedy recovery, and love to him and your dear little ones,

"Your affectionate brother,
"T. Bland."

It is difficult to imagine that one of the "dear little ones" was John Randolph of Roanoke — that incarnation of genius and outrageous temper. His father survived Dr. Bland's treatment only a few years. Still, fidelity to historic truth impels me to state that we have no evidence that the doctor was in league with Henry St. George Tucker, who almost immediately married the widow!

CHAPTER X

MANY of the best types of purely American society could have been found in the forties in the towns of the country. Now everybody, high and low, rich and poor, seeks a home in the cities. It is not without reason that all classes should flock to the metropolis. There wealth can be enjoyed, poverty aided, talent appreciated; but there individual influence is almost lost. The temptation to self-assertion, repugnant as it is to refined feeling, is almost irresistible. Men and women must assert themselves or sink into oblivion. Nobody has time to climb the rickety stairs to find the genius in the attic. Nobody looks for the statesman among the serene adherents to the "Simple Life." Had Cincinnatus lived at this day, he would have ploughed to the end of his furrow. Nobody would have interrupted him.

The absence of all the hurry and fever of life made the little town of Charlottesville an ideal home before the cataclysm of 1861. The professors at the University could live, in the moderate age, upon their modest salaries, and have something to spare for entertaining. The village contingent was refined, amiable, and intelligent. Staunton sent us, every winter, her young ladies, the daughters of Judge Lucas Thompson, all of whom were finally absorbed by the descendants of Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, Maryland. From the neighborhood on the Buckmountain Road came the family of William C. Rives, twice our envoy to the Court of Versailles, and many times sent to the Senate of the United States. The "gallant Gordons, many a one," the Randolphs and Pages, and Mr. Stevenson, late Minister to England, — all these lived near enough to be neighbors and visitors. Across Moore's Creek, at the foot of Monticello, was the house of Mr. Alexander Rives. There lived my sweet friend and bridesmaid, Eliza Rives, and there I could call for a glass of lemonade when on my way to Monticello, guiding, as I often did, some stranger-guest to visit the home of Thomas Jefferson. We would pass through the straggling bushes of Scottish broom which bordered the road — planted originally by Mr. Jefferson himself — pause at the modest monument over his ashes, and reverently ponder the inscription thereon. In his own handwriting, among his papers, had been found the record he desired — not that he had been Minister to France and Secretary of State, not that he had been twice President of the United States, but simply, —

> "Here lies buried Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia."

A few steps through the woods would bring us to the plateau commanding the noble view I have tried to describe. I loved the spot, the glorious mountains, the glimpse at our feet of the Greek temple

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

in its sacred grove, the atmosphere of mystery and romance. Once I saw a solitary *fleur-de-lis* unfurling its imperial banner on the site of the abandoned garden. Once I was permitted, in the absence of the owner, to explore an upper floor in the villa, and was startled by a white, strained face gleaming out from a dim alcove. This was the bust of Voltaire. A happy, happy young girl was I on these rides, mounted on my own horse, Phil Duval, and not unconscious of my becoming green cloth habit, green velvet turban, and long green feather, fastened with a diamond buckle — as I believed it to be!

Young girls reared in a university town and admitted to the friendship of the professors' families must be dull indeed if they absorb nothing from the literary atmosphere. My dear aunt was an accomplished English scholar. Her father had been the friend and neighbor of Patrick Henry, her husband had been one of John Randolph's physicians. My close friends, the Gilmers, Southalls, and the daughters of Professor Harrison, all had brothers who were students, and we strove to keep pace with these fine young fellows and meet them on English ground at least.

We had no circulating library in Charlottesville, and depended upon the mails for our current literature. We saw *Graham's Magazine* from Philadelphia, the *Home Journal* from New York, the *Southern Literary Messenger* from Richmond. Dickens's novels reached us from London, issued then in monthly sections, and we impatiently awaited them. "Oh, Sara, have you been introduced to Mr. Toots?"

wrote Maria Gordon; "he is so much in love with Florence Dombey, he 'feels as if somebody was a-settin' on him!'"

We liked Dickens better than Walter Scott. We found the remarks of Captain Clutterbuck and the Rev. Dryasdust hard to bear, barring the door to the enchanted palace until they had their say. To be sure, Dickens could be tiresome too, pausing in the middle of an exciting story while somebody — the "stroller" or the "bagman" — related something wholly irrelevant. To my mind, a story within a story was a nuisance. It was like a patch on a garment. The garment might be homespun and the patch satin, but it was a blemish, nevertheless, something put on to help a weak place. I skipped these stories then and skip them now!

As to Thackeray, I blush to say we did not appreciate him when he appeared as "Michael Angelo Titmarsh." But we all knew Becky! She was only a sublimated little Miss Betsy Stevens, a ragged mountain woman who sold peaches on a small commission, and who, like Becky, having "no mamma" or other asset, lived by her wits.

Perhaps in our estimation of Thackeray we were guided somewhat by his own countrymen. An English paper fell in our hands which was not at all respectful to "Chawls-Yellowplush-Angelo-Titmarsh-Jeames-William-Makepeace-Thackeray, Esquire of London Town in old England." Such ridicule would soon settle him! No man could survive it.

None of the visiting authors deigned to call on us, — Thackeray, Dickens, Miss Martineau, — all passed us by. True, Frederika Bremer condescended to spend a night with her compatriot, Mr. Schéle de Vere, *en route* to the South, where she was to find little to admire except bananas. Mr. Schéle invited a choice company to spend the one evening Miss Bremer granted him. Her novels were extremely popular with us. Every one was on tiptoe of pleased anticipation. While the waiting company eagerly expected her, the door opened — not for Miss Bremer, but her companion, who announced: —

"Miss Bremer, she beg excuse. She *ver* tired and must sleep! If she come, she gape in your noses!"

Alas for tourist's help in the translating books! "Face" and "nose," "gape" and "yawn," although not synonymic, bear at least a cousinly relation to each other.

The beautiful Christian custom of lighting a Christmas tree — bringing "the glory of Lebanon, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box," to hallow our festival — had not yet obtained in Virginia. We had heard much of the German Christmas tree, but had never seen one. Lizzie Gilmer, who was to marry a younger son of the house, was intimate with the Tuckers, and brought great reports of the preparation of the first Christmas tree ever seen in Virginia.

I had not yet been allowed to attend the parties of "grown-up" people, but our young friend John Randolph Tucker was coming of age on Christmas Eve, and great pressure was brought to bear upon my aunt to permit me to attend the birthday celebration. This was a memorable occasion. "Rare Ran Tucker" was a prime favorite with the older set, handsome, distingué, and already marked for the high place he attained later on the honor roll of his country.

My aunt could not persist in her rules for me, and I was permitted, provided I went as "a little girl in a high-necked dress," to accompany Lizzie. My much-discussed gown was of blue silk, opening over white, and laced from throat to hem with narrow black velvet! Never, never was girl as happy! The tree loaded with tiny baskets of bonbons, each enriched with an original rhyming jest or sentiment, was magnificent, the supper delicious, the speeches and poems from the two old judges (Tucker) were apt and witty. I went as a little girl — a close bud — but no "high-necked" gown ever prisoned a happier heart.

It seems to me, as I look back, that my University friends, Mr. Schéle de Vere, James Southall, William C. Rives, Jr., George Wythe Randolph, Roger Pryor, *et al.*, felt all at once a very kind interest in my education. They sent me no end of books. The last presented me with a gorgeous Shakespeare, also Macaulay's "Essays," Hazlitt's "Age of Elizabeth" and Leigh Hunt's "Fancy and Imagination," and came himself to read them to me, along with Shelley, Keats, Byron, and Coleridge. Mr. Schéle sent me much music and French literature, he also coming to read the latter with me. William C. Rives loved my music, to which he could listen by the hour. I kept the friendship of these brilliant men as long as they lived. Only two lived to be old.

The Tuckers were a family of literary distinction — One of the happiest and wittiest of them was my dear Lizzie's husband, St. George Tucker. Anything, everything, would provoke a pun, a parody, or a graceful rhyme.

When it was proposed to change the name of "Competition" — a court-house village in the county of Pittsylvania — to "Chatham," he produced a pencil and paper, and in a moment gave: —

> "Illustrious Pitt, how glòrious is thy fame,
> When Competition dies in Chatham's name."

He was a friend of G. P. R. James, whom he once surprised eating a very "ripe" cheese.

"You see, Tucker, I am, like Samson, slaying my thousands."

"And with the same weapon?" inquired St. George.

We had a delightful addition to our society in Powhatan Starke, who came from the Eastern Shore, and spent a year first as a guest of the Southalls, and later of all of us. He seemed to have been created for the express purpose of making people happy. He would have us all convulsed with laughter while he held the woollen skeins for my aunt's knitting. He taught me on the piano waltzes not to be found in the books; and the polka, a new dance with picturesque figures just then introduced. He joined in and enhanced every scheme for pleasure, and would finally spend half the night serenading us.

"The serenade," according to a recent definition, "is a cherished courtship custom of primitive societies." Courtship had nothing to do with it in 1847. It was only a delicate compliment to ladies who had entertained the serenaders. Four or five voices in unison would sing such songs as "Oft in the Stilly Night," "The Last Rose of Summer," "Eileen Aroon," "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton," and one voice render Rizzio's lovely song: —

> "Queen of my soul whose starlit eyes
> Are all the light I seek,
> Whose voice in sweetest melodies
> Can love or pardon speak;
> I yield me to thy soft control
> Mary — Mary — Queen of my soul!
> (*Chorus*) Mary! Mary! Queen of my soul!"

With the first twang of the guitar strings we would slip from our beds, find our shawls and slippers, and creep downstairs. Crouched close to the door, we would listen for *Vive l'amour*, the song always concluding the serenade: —

> "Let every bachelor fill up his glass,
> Vive la Compagnie!
> And drink to the health of his favorite lass,
> Vive la Compagnie!"

And just here, rising as it were to a question of privilege concerning individual rights, let me solemnly assure my reader that I do not plagiarize from "Trilby." The low-hanging fruit of Mr. Du Maurier's bountiful orchard is to be desired to make wise the daughters of Eve, but this Eve has no occasion to rob it. *Au contraire!* Powhatan

Starke had brought this song from Paris in the forties and sung it for us twenty years before, according to Du Maurier, the "genteel Carnegie" had given it in his hiccupy voice to the Laird, Taffy, Little Billie, Dodor, Zouzou, and the rest.

Personally, I should like to help myself with both hands to the clever things the young authors are writing. But I am "proud, tho' poor!" Besides, I should be found out! "Mon verre n'est pas grand, mais je bois dans mon verre."

I know, I have heard, but one verse of this immortal song. All the rest were freshly made, whether at dinner, evening party, or moonlight serenade, to suit the company and the occasion. The chorus, as rendered by Carnegie the genteel, was: —

> "Veeverler, Veeverler, veverler vee
> Veverler Companyee."

But my friend twenty years before respected it enough to be accurate: —

> "Vive! Vive! Vive l'amour
> Vive la compagnie!"

Only he, like *les autres*, sometimes dropped his "*r*'s." They were all nice in their pronunciation. They gave to the broad "*a*" its fullest due.

> "E'en the slight hahbell raised its head
> Elahstic from her ahry tread!"

exclaimed George Gordon, as one of the maidens tripped across the lawn. But even he was sometimes indifferent to the rights, as a terminal, of the letter "*r*"; for only as a terminal does the Southern tongue utterly scorn it. When but a lisping infant, a possible orator was drilled in the test words: —

> "Around the rugged rocks
> The ragged rascal ran,"

and taught to roll the elusive consonant to the utmost limit.

But I must linger no longer in this enchanted valley among the mountains. A long road lies before me. I must pass swiftly on. With just such trifling events I might fill my book. Dear to every heart are the annals of its youth; before we enter the vast world of —

> "Effort, and expectation and desire —
> And something evermore about to be."

We cherish the sweet nothings of a happy time as we preserve dried rose-leaves. Mayhap through their faint fragrance we may dream the rose!

It was a busy time as well as a happy time. I was helping Mrs. William C. Rives build a church; I was hemstitching all the ruffles for Thomasia Woodson's trousseau; I was playing waltzes, *ad infinitum*, at the house-parties in Charlotte — the Henrys and Carringtons — and singing campaign songs, to the great delight of my dear grandfather, in honor of my old friend, Henry Clay, whom we were once more trying to make our President: —

> "Get out o' the way, you're all unlucky;
> Clear the track for old Kentucky!"

(And just here I wish to record the fact that only once in all my life did my old grandfather ever re-prove me. I had committed a flagrant act of *lèse majestie*. I had put a nightcap on the bust of Patrick Henry!)

But my dear aunt's invitations, written on paper embossed with an orange-blossom and tied with white satin ribbon, were now issued for my wedding.

I had begun my acquaintance with the young man known now as "the General," or "the Judge," by beseeching God to take care of him. According to my Presbyterian training, I was taught that every prayer must be followed by efforts for its fulfilment. It was clearly my duty "to take care of him." He needed it.

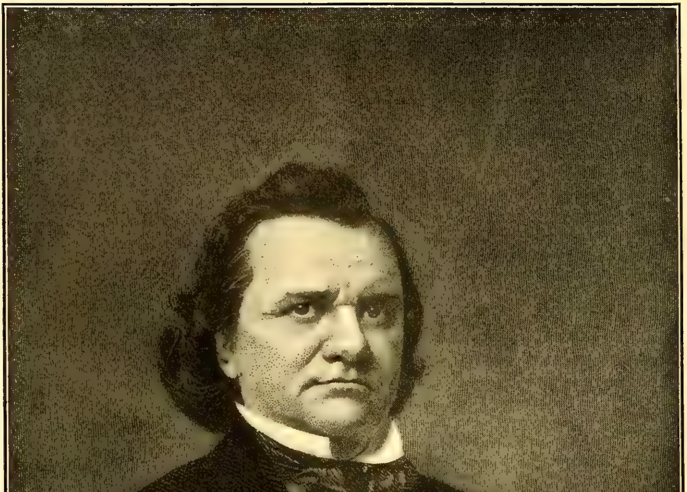
CHAPTER XI

TWO years after our marriage, my husband was seriously ill from an affection of the throat, and consulted Dr. Green, an eminent specialist of Philadelphia. He was ordered to a warmer climate, and forbidden to speak in or out of court. The tiny law office at a corner of the court green in Charlottesville was abandoned, and we hastened to Petersburg, near his birthplace. As it was absolutely impossible for him to exist without occupation, he purchased a newspaper, sallied forth one morning to solicit subscribers for "*The South Side Democrat*," and before a week's end was justified in beginning its issue.

This step determined his career in life. He did not practise law until he came to New York in 1865.

At the age of twenty-two he became an enthusiastic editor. The little *South Side Democrat* soon evinced pluck and spirit. Its youthful editor sailed his small craft right into the troubled sea of politics, local and national, to sink or swim according to its merits and the wisdom of its pilot. It was loved of the gods, with the inevitable result, — but not until he left it.

I remember our first meeting with Stephen A. Douglas, so soon to become a conspicuous figure in our political history. He had just returned from Europe, and was passing through Petersburg with



STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS.

his first wife (Miss Martin of North Carolina), and of course glad to talk with the editor of a Democratic paper, aspiring as he did to the highest office in the country. He was thirty-nine years old, and below the average height. But the word *insignificant* could never have been applied to him. There was something in his air, his carriage, that forbade it. His massive head, his resolute face, more than compensated for his short stature.

He has always been accused of rude, unconventional manners. He was enough of a courtier to inform me that I resembled the Empress Eugénie.

To us he took the trouble to be charming, talked of his European experience — of everything, in fact, except the perilous stuff burning in his own bosom, his hunger for the presidency. Like my editor, he had been admitted to the bar before he had reached his majority. The parallel was to appear again later. Mr. Douglas also had been a representative in Congress at thirty.

My husband was a delegate to the Democratic Convention that nominated Franklin Pierce in 1852, and Mr. Douglas suffered himself to be a candidate.

The "Little Giant" received at first only 20 votes, but he steadily increased until Virginia cast her 15 votes for Mr. Pierce, after which there was "a stampede" which decided the matter. Some writer reminded Douglas that vaulting ambition overleaps itself, but added dryly, "Perhaps the little Judge never read Shakespeare and does not think of this."

An interesting event in Petersburg was a brief visit from Louis Kossuth *en route* to the Southern and Western cities, his avowed purpose being "to invoke the aid of the great American republic to protect his people; peaceably, if they may, by the moral influence of their declarations; but forcibly, if they must, by the physical power of their arm — to prevent any foreign interference in the struggle to be renewed for the liberties of Hungary."

Our Congress, it will be remembered,[1] had, after Kossuth's defeat and his detention in Turkey — whither he had fled for refuge — directed the President to offer one of the ships of our Mediterranean squadron to bring him and his suite to our country. The Turkish government had no especial use for Governor Kossuth as a guest or as a captive, and accordingly he landed from the steamer *Vanderbilt* which had been sent with a committee to meet him, at New York quarantine, December 5, 1851, at one o'clock in the morning. Early as was the hour, a great crowd collected on shore to greet him. A salute of twenty-one guns and an address of welcome from the health-officer at once assured him that he came to us, not to be pitied as a defeated refugee, but to receive all honor due a conquering hero. As his boat steamed by, Governor's Island gave him a salute of thirty-one guns, New Jersey one hundred and twenty, and New York, — but we know how New York can behave! Steamers, great and small, whistled, pistols and guns were fired, Hungarian cheers were shouted, and our Stars and Stripes took into close embrace the Hungarian flag. We know

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[1] Rhodes's "History of the United States," Vol. I., pp. 231 *et seq.*

New York hospitality, and her enthusiasm, nay, crazy excitement when something, anything, novel and interesting happens.

When Kossuth reached Castle Garden, the unhappy mayor essayed in vain to read his speech. Speech, indeed! A hundred thousand throats were aching with a speech, and they delivered it with a roar!

"There was," says a reporter, "a continuous roar of cheers like waves on the shore." Every house was decorated; and as the hero passed, mounted on Black Warrior, a horse which had borne conquerors in many Florida and Mexican wars, the street was jammed with enthusiastic people, and the windows alive with women and children. Never, since the landing of Lafayette, had New York so abandoned herself to enthusiasm. The story is too long — of the speeches, processions, dinners, receptions, fireworks, etc. — to be repeated fully in these pages.

Of course, the little *South Side Democrat* threw up its cap with the rest. Kossuth, when he reached the town, had already received honors of which his wildest fancy never dreamed, and we did our best to echo them according to our ability. There were several ladies in his suite to whom I paid my respects (I am not sure his wife was among them), and the only impression they made upon me was one of extreme weariness. They spoke English fairly well, but were too utterly worn out to exhibit the least animation. Kossuth spoke English perfectly. He had a long talk with my young editor, to whom he gave a huge cigar, which was never reduced to ashes!

But after he left, the *South Side Democrat* came to its senses (having never utterly lost them), and expressed a decided opinion in favor of the non-intervention of this country in the affairs of Hungary, giving good reasons therefor. Kossuth, when the paper was handed him, read the editorial carefully, and exclaimed, "*So young*, and yet so depraved!" adding, with his usual tact, "I mean, of course, politically!"

But even at this highest pinnacle of glory in New York, when an editorial banquet was given him at The Astor by George Bancroft, William Cullen Bryant, Henry J. Raymond, Parke Godwin, Henry Ward Beecher, Charles A. Dana, and others, Mr. Webster had coldly declined attendance.

His letter was received with hisses and groans. "Kossuth," said Mr. Webster, in a private letter from Washington, "is a gentleman in appearance and demeanor, is handsome enough in person, evidently intellectual and dignified, amiable and graceful in his manners. I shall treat him with all personal and individual respect; but if he should speak to me of the policy of 'intervention,' I shall have ears more deaf than adders'."

The Senate, the President, Congress, all received him cordially. He dined at the White House; was treated with the utmost distinction, and a seat of honor assigned him on the floor of the Senate; but before he left Washington, every one except himself knew that his mission had failed. He soon discovered it, and appealed no longer for intervention but for money. He complained bitterly at Pittsburg that he had received little but costly banquets and foolish parades. The net amount of the contributions to his cause was less than $100,000, and according to his statement at Pittsburg, only $30,000 remained for the purchase of muskets. We had expressed with enthusiasm our appreciation of his patriotism, courage, and devotion. We had entertained him *en prince*. We had added a substantial gift. It was not enough.

The citizens of New York very soon calmed down, and by the middle of January the name of Kossuth was rarely mentioned. When Congress came to audit his hotel bill, it fairly gasped! The retainers of the poor refugee had not been poor livers. They had occupied luxurious apartments, and proved beyond a shadow of doubt the Hungarian appreciation of old Madeira and champagne. No one, however, could accuse the hero himself of excess. Still, all at once, he seemed less of a hero.

One unprejudiced looker-on in Vienna, Ampère, wrote of Kossuth at the editorial dinner, "He has the bad taste to love fanciful dress, wore a *lévite* of black velvet, and seemed to me much less imposing than when he harangued, leaning upon his sword, in the hall at Castle Garden." Ampère also philosophizes upon our American enthusiasm, — "the only lively amusement of the multitude in a country where one has little to amuse one. It is without consequence and without danger, simply to let out the steam (*à lâcher la vapeur*), not to cause explosions but to prevent them."

"The American likes excitement," says Bryce in

"The American Commonwealth," "but he is shrewd and keen; his passion seldom obscures his reason; he keeps his head when a Frenchman, or an Italian, or even a German, would lose it. Yet he is also of an excitable temper, with emotions capable of being quickly and strongly stirred. He likes excitement for its own sake, and goes wherever he can find it."

The Kossuth episode vividly illustrated this! *Sic transit gloria* — be it prince or patriot!

My young editor had soon to leave the *South Side Democrat* under the care of a foster-father. He was summoned to Washington — lured less by a fine salary than the larger field — to edit with John W. Forney the *Washington Union*, then the national Democratic organ. It was desired that one of the two editors should be from the South. Mr. Forney represented the North.

CHAPTER XII

WE had the good fortune to secure pleasant rooms in the large boarding-house of Mrs. Tully Wise, sister of Henry A. Wise of Virginia. Mrs. Wise had a number of agreeable people in her house: Professor and Mrs. Spenser Baird of the Smithsonian Institution; Professor Baird's assistants, — Mr. Turner, an Englishman, and a Swiss naturalist whom Professor Baird addressed as "George," — Mr. James Heth, Commissioner of Pensions, and his family; Commodore Pennock and his wife, sister of Mrs. (Admiral) Farragut, and others. I must not forget Miss Dick, whose rooms were above mine, and who hovered around like the plump, busy little bird that she was. A long table in the dining-room was filled with "new" people — desirable possibly, but not known by us. There were the *nouveau riche* party from New York, the tall, angular, large-limbed, *passée* young woman and her fat mamma; there were the well-groomed government clerk and his stylish young wife; a French count, a German baron; a physician (Dr. McNalty), and a beautiful dark-eyed young lady who always wore a camellia in her dusky hair, Miss — well, let her be "Miss Vernon," with her father. Lesser lights plenty — a large number in all.

Then Mrs. Wise herself gathered pleasant men and women around her. In her little parlor we met

Dr. Yelverton Garnett, our devoted friend in all his after life — Mrs. Garnett, daughter of Henry A. Wise, and a charming young sister, Annie Wise. Our hostess was a widow, well born and good, who was educating, alone and unaided, five splendid boys, who lived to reward her by their own worth and success.

We were made thoroughly comfortable, and I soon learned that the "man behind the gun," to whom it behooved me to be civil, was the head waiter, Patrick, tall, black, stern, and unyielding. No use in trying blandishments on Patrick! If one were starved, having overstayed appointed hours, she must fast until the next meal or find refreshment elsewhere. I once complained to Mrs. Wise, — that I lost the sweetest hour in the late afternoon for my stroll on Pennsylvania Avenue; and represented the perfect ease with which Patrick could keep my tea for me. She listened with sympathy to the oft-told tale.

"Well, you know, my dear," she said kindly, "Patrick — now you know Patrick is *so* good! There's nobody like Patrick! He has some trouble, with all those strangers to serve. I know you would like to help Patrick! Yes, to be sure, it would seem to be a simple thing to set aside a biscuit and bit of cold tongue for you, and keep the kettle hot on the hearth, — but you see Patrick, — well, he *is* so good, you'll not have the heart to trouble him! And dear! I think you will yourself choose to be indoors early here in Washington."

The one who was "dear" was Mrs. Wise — the noblest and best of women.

Very soon I found that with all these pieces upon the board, a lively game might be expected. Miss Dick, whose brother was employed by the government, soon enlightened me: the rich New York girl wanted a title. She was "trying to catch" the baron, and would succeed, "as nobody else wanted either of them." Miss Vernon was dying for love of Dr. McNalty. She was going into a decline. Probably the doctor was ignorant of the state of things. Such a beautiful girl — a perfect lady! Somebody ought to speak to the doctor. She, (Miss Dick) couldn't. Nobody would listen to an old maid — "perhaps *you*, Mrs. Pryor" — ("Oh, mercy, no") — well, then, poor girl! The French count was flirting with the wife of the government clerk. Her husband would find *her* out, never fear! There was danger of a hostile meeting before the winter was over. Then that hateful old Dr. Todkin, with his straw-colored wig! To be sure, she and some others liked the parlors kept dark — but what business had he to say he hoped some lady would come who "liked the light and *could bear the light!*" Such Dutch impertinence!

I received these confidences of Miss Dick in my own rooms, for I soon learned, with Mrs. Baird and Mrs. Heth, that the public drawing-room was no place for me.

"Gossip!" said they. "It has gone beyond gossip! The air is thick with something worse. You might cut it with a knife."

But it was not long before we had a ripple in our own calm waters. On one side of me at our round table sat Mr. George, the eccentric, small, intense

Swiss naturalist, who amused me much by affecting to be a woman-hater.

"Not that they concern me," he said, "but,—well, I find fishes more interesting. I understand them better."

Beside my husband was placed our special pet, Maria Heth, taken under our wing in the absence of her parents, neither of whom ever appeared. The circle was completed by Professor and Mrs. Baird, little Lucy Baird, and Mr. Turner. In course of time my right-hand man fell into silence, broken by long-drawn sighs. I supposed he had lost a "specimen," or failed to find enough bones in some fish he was to classify, or maybe heard bad news from home, or belike had a toothache; so, after a few essays on my part to encourage him, I let him alone. Presently his place at the board was vacant. Things went on in this way until one morning, early, Maria Heth knocked at my door.

"I am troubled about Mr. George," she said. "I am sorry to worry you, but I'm afraid there's no help for it. Mamma is too nervous to hear unpleasant things, and I'm afraid of exciting papa."

"Come to the point, Maria! Mr. George, you say! Well, then, what about Mr. George?"

"Well, you know he's been missing nearly a week. It was no business of mine. I had no dream *I* had anything to do with it. But see what he has written me! 'This comes to you from a broken-hearted man. *Forget him!* You will meet him no more on earth. Perhaps—*yonder!* George.'"

Questioning Maria further, she confessed that on the day Mr. George disappeared, she received from him a passionate love-letter. She had answered him curtly. Yes, — she certainly had told him what she thought of his impertinence. "Of course, I am distressed, but what could I do," said the poor child. "You know my brother! Richard would have been enraged. I had to settle him once for all to save trouble."

I went immediately to Mrs. Baird with my information. She, too, had become anxious at the sudden disappearance of the young naturalist. He had not been seen at the Institution, and investigation revealed the fact that he had not occupied his rooms. Professor Baird was deeply concerned, and a vigorous search was made for the missing man.

Upon returning from my walk that evening, I found a note on my table from Mrs. Baird. The runaway had been found. It would be unnecessary to drag the river or notify the police. He was discovered in the upper chamber of an humble lodging-house, very limp and penitent, but "clothed and in his right mind." He had not been drinking, he had not been in the river. I never knew what Professor Baird did to him — pulled him out of bed, very likely, and shook him into his senses. So we lost Mr. George (whose surname I dare not reveal), and he was doubtless mightily strengthened in his opinion of women — not to be understood by him and not, by any means, comparable to fishes.

Perhaps I should not leave the *dramatis personæ* of our boarding-house "in the air." Before I left Mrs. Wise, the baron was safely moored into harbor by the tall young lady from New York. The government clerk had openly insulted the French count, and it was supposed a challenge had passed between them. Evidently nothing had come of it. If they fought, it was a bloodless battle. The exquisite Miss Vernon had reappeared, thinner, paler, but radiant and beautiful exceedingly. Miss Dick was puzzled. Perhaps the girl had "gotten over it," like a sensible woman. Perhaps she had not been ill at all — only hysterical. It was not impossible she might have feigned illness "to bring him around." These were some of the solutions of the problem that occurred to Miss Dick.

I could have enlightened her. One evening, Dr. McNalty, whom I knew but slightly, spoke to me in the hall. He had a soft white parcel in his hand and seemed embarrassed and agitated. He begged me to do him a great kindness — would I see Miss Vernon — not send a messenger, see her myself and give her some camellias from him. Possibly there might be some message from her. He would await my return.

Would I? I flew on the wings of hope and keen interest. I comprehended the situation. Of course there had been a misunderstanding. Possibly his letters had been returned and unopened. Only a desperate necessity could have nerved him to appeal to me — almost a stranger. I rose to the occasion, and when I was admitted to Miss Vernon's room, I was prepared to be an eloquent advocate, should circumstances encourage and justify me.

When I returned to Dr. McNalty, I bore a message. She had laid the camellias against her lovely cheek and said, " Tell him his flowers are whispering to me."

I hope my reader will appreciate my reticence in ending this little story just here. If, as Talleyrand declared, " a man who suppresses a *bon mot* deserves canonization," is there no nimbus for the woman who, for truth's sake, suppresses the *dénouement* of a love story ? The temptation is great to amplify a little, embroider a little — but then I should have to reckon with my conscience, with the certainty of being worsted.

As a matter of fact, I know only this of the young woman I am constrained to call Miss Vernon. Her true name was one well and honorably known in history. She was the most beautiful of all dark-eyed women I have ever known — of course the blue-eyed angels are exceptional — and her manners and attire were as elegant as her person. She wore rich velvet, then much in vogue, and only one jewel : —

> " On her fair breast a sparkling cross she wore
> Which Jews might kiss and infidels adore."

I never knew the end of the romance in which I bore a small part. I never even knew of what whisperings camellias are capable. Had they been violets — or roses, or lilies of the valley — but big white camellias ! I only know she recovered and that Dr. McNalty thanked me warmly for my small service. That is all.

CHAPTER XIII

MR. FILLMORE was a fine type of the kind of man Americans love to raise to the highest office in their gift. He had not been a mill boy, nor lived in a log-cabin, nor split rails (which was to his discredit), but he had been an apprentice to a wool-carder in Livingston County, New York. Afterward he had worked in a lawyer's office all day and studied at night. He had had no patron. He was essentially a self-made man. When, by the death of President Taylor, he became President of the United States, he fitted into the place as if he had made himself expressly for it.

According to Ampère, who observed us so narrowly in 1852, "M. Fillmore avait un cachet de simplicité digne et bienveillante, qui me semble faire de lui le type de ce que doit être un président Américain."

But nobody said any of those fine things about dear Mrs. Fillmore. The *cachet de simplicité* she certainly possessed, but she wore it with a difference. In a President it was admirable, in a beautiful woman it would have been adorable. It stamped plain, unhandsome, ungraceful Mrs. Fillmore as ordinary, commonplace. She was the soul of kindness. "She has no manner," said a woman of fashion. "She is absolutely simple. It is not good form to be so motherly to her guests. Why, what do you think she said to me at the last levee? 'You look pale and ill, my dear! Pray find a seat.' Think of that! Haven't I a right to look pale and ill, I wonder!"

"She meant to be kind," I ventured. "Should she have permitted you to faint on the floor?"

"Kind, indeed! It was her duty, if she thought me 'gone off in my looks,' to tell me how *well* I was looking! I should have been all right after that. As it was, I came straight home and went to bed."

I fairly revelled in the music I could now hear. From a famous musician, Mr. Palmer, I took lessons again. He was a notable character — a splendid musician, and a welcome guest at Mr. Corcoran's and other houses, where he amused the company with tricks of legerdemain. He afterward became the celebrated "Heller," the prince of legerdemain and clairvoyance. The elder Booth, Hackett, and Anna Cora Mowatt introduced me to the fascinations of the stage. Nothing to my mind had ever been, could ever be, finer than their Hamlet, Falstaff, and Parthenia. The Armstrongs gave me *carte blanche* to their box at the theatre, and I saw everything. I wonder if any one at the present day remembers the Ravel brothers and their matchless pantomimes! Mrs. Baird made a party, taking little Lucy to see "Jocko." Not a word was spoken in the play; not an eye was dry in the house.

One evening an agreeable Frenchman whom we knew joined us in our box, and seeking an opportunity, whispered to me, "Madame, will you grant me a favor? There—in the parquette, second from the front, *voyes-vous?* A lady *en chapeau bleu?*"

"Yes, yes, I see! Who is she?"

"Madame" (tragically), "that *demoiselle* with the young man is *fiancée* to my friend!"

"And you are perhaps jealous!"

"Ah, *mais non*, Madame! I have this moment said to my friend, '*Regardez votre fiancée.*' He has responded, '*C'est vrai!* It is custom of this country.'"

"And what then?" I asked.

"Oh!" shrugging his shoulders in scorn not to be expressed in words, "I say, '*Eh bien, Emil.* If *you* satisfy, *I* very well satisfy!' But, pardon, Madame, is it *convénable* in this country for *demoiselle* to appear at theatre with young gentleman without chaperon?"

I found refuge in ignorance: "I am sure I cannot say. You see I am from Virginia. I haven't been long in Washington, and customs here may differ from manners in my home."

I was a proud woman when Mr. Pierce sent for my young editor to read with him his inaugural address. These were mighty political secrets, not to be shared with Miss Dick, and thus published to her little boarding-house world. I felt that I belonged, not to that nor to any other small world. I belonged to the nation; and strange to say, that impression (or must I say delusion?) never left me in my darkest, most obscure days.

Mr. Pierce liked my young editor. We adored *him!* Only since we lost him have we learned of his many mistakes, vacillation, weakness, unpopularity; nothing of these appeared in 1852. He had been a fine politician, had served his country "with bravery and credit," enlisting as a private in the Mexican War. "His integrity was above suspicion, and he was deeply religious." It is quite certain he did not desire the nomination. There was nobody in his family to exult over his promotion, no son, no daughter to blossom with new beauty because of the splendid stem on which she grew. Only a sick, broken-hearted wife, too feeble to endure the exactions of social life, too sad to take part in anything outside her own room. She did not even attempt it. It was at once understood that our republican court was such only in name. In name only did Mrs. Pierce appear in its annals. I never saw her. I never saw any one who had seen her. We thought of her as a Mater Dolorosa, shrouded in deepest mourning, and we gave her a sacred place in our hearts.

I cannot close my records of this, my earliest experience of Washington life, without remembering with gratitude all I owe to the friendship and wisdom of the discreet, cultured women who felt an early interest in me, guiding and instructing me. Mrs. Spenser Baird, Mrs. Garnett (*née* Wise), lovely Annie Wise, and Maria Heth, these were my intimate friends. Mrs. Garnett, a lovely Christian woman, watched me closely and restrained me in my natural desire for beautiful raiment. I once confessed to her, almost with tears, that Léonide Delarue had beguiled me into giving forty dollars for a bonnet, whereupon she produced pencil and paper and proved that the material (exclusive of a bit of superfluous point-lace) could be obtained for ten dollars. The young English queen, it was said, could make her own bonnets. But I could not succeed as a milliner. I had some talent, but not in that line. However, that I might please and surprise Mrs. Garnett and also imitate the Queen, when the time came for me to indulge myself in a winter bonnet (we did not call them hats — they weren't hats!), I essayed the "creation" of one with velvet, satin, and feathers galore. It was a dreadful failure! I took it to Madame Delarue's and begged her to tell me what ailed it.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she exclaimed, throwing up her hands in despair, "*pésante*."

I gave away my "creation" to somebody in my service — anybody who would condescend to accept it. Mrs. Garnett felt I could hardly afford to try again. She knew, however, how important to me as a young politician's wife would be the virtue of economy. It is not written in the stars that an honest politician can ever be rich. A great evening reception was to be given by some magnate at which my young editor consented to be present. He secretly visited Harper's fine store and brought home a lovely "bertha" for me made of three rows of point-lace. I gasped! But I was prudent. I accepted it with apparent pleasure, went to Harper's, found it had been charged, and effected its return. But here was a dilemma. I was to attend the reception. I was to wear evening dress and a beautiful "bertha."

"Have you not imitation lace?" I inquired.

Harper had, — and the imitation was good, — the price of plenty of it ten dollars. I guiltily made the exchange, took a searching look at my model, and perfectly copied it.

That evening, brave in my counterfeit presentment I stood under a blaze of light with my intimates, Mrs. Clay, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, and others around me. My editor approached and was complimented upon my appearance. "Ah, but," he said, in the pride of his young heart, "if I can only keep it up! Why, Mrs. Clay, that bit of lace cost me hundreds of dollars!" I caught the wondering eyes of my fully instructed friends, gave them an imploring glance — and when the boastful young fellow departed, told them my story. They said I was a very silly woman.

Mr. Fillmore's tastes had been sufficiently ripened to enable him to gather around him men of literary taste and attainment. John P. Kennedy, a man of elegant accomplishments, was Secretary of the Navy. Washington Irving was often Mr. Kennedy's guest. We knew these men, and among them none was brighter, wittier, or more genial than G. P. R. James, the English novelist whose star rose and set before 1860. He was the most prolific of writers, "Like an endless chain of buckets in a well," said one; "as fast as one is emptied, up comes another."

We were very fond of Mr. James. One day he dashed in, much excited: —

"Have you seen the *Intelligencer?* By George, it's all true! Six times has my hero, a 'solitary horseman,' emerged from a wood! My word! I was totally unconscious of it! Fancy it! Six times! Well, it's all up with that fellow. He has got to dismount and enter on foot — a beggar, or burglar, or pedler, or at best a mendicant friar."

"But," suggested one, "he might drive, mightn't he?"

"Impossible!" said Mr. James. "Imagine a hero in a gig or a curricle!"

"Perhaps," said one, "the word 'solitary' has given offence. Americans dislike exclusiveness. They are sensitive, you see, and look out for snobs."

He made himself very merry over it; but the solitary horseman appeared no more in the few novels he was yet to write.

One day, after a pleasant visit from Mr. James and his wife, I accompanied them at parting to the front door, and found some difficulty in turning the bolt. He offered to assist, but I said no — he was not supposed to understand the mystery of an American front door.

Having occasion a few minutes afterward to open the door for another departing guest, there on his knees outside was Mr. James, who laughingly explained that he had left his wife at the corner, and had come back to investigate that mystery. "Perhaps you will tell me," he added, and was much amused to learn that the American door opened of itself to an incoming guest, but positively refused, without coaxing, to let him out. "By George, that's fine!" he said, "that'll please the critics in my next." I never knew whether it was admitted, for I must confess that, even with the stimulus of his presence, his books were dreary reading to my uninstructed taste.

A very lovely and charming actress was prominent in Washington society at this time, — the daughter of an old New York family, Anna Cora (Ogden) Mowatt. She was especially interesting to Virginians, for she had captivated Foushee Ritchie, soon afterward my husband's partner on the editorship of the *Richmond Enquirer*. Mr. Ritchie, a confirmed old bachelor, had been fascinated by Mrs. Mowatt's Parthenia (in "Ingomar"), and was now engaged to her. He proudly brought to me a pair of velvet slippers she had embroidered for him, working around them as a border a quotation from "Ingomar": —

"Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one."

CHAPTER XIV

I WAS peacefully enjoying a cup of tea with Mrs. Arnold Harris, when her father, old General Armstrong, entered, and brought me the astounding news that my husband had resigned his position as editor of the *Washington Union.*

"Oh, that boy! He thinks he knows more about foreign politics than I do."

I was very fond of the General, who had always treated me in a fatherly and most kind manner. But of course I could not hear my husband discussed, even by him, so I expressed polite regrets and hastened home. It was too true! The junior partner had published in the *Union* a very strong article, taking the part of Russia in the Crimean War, and General Armstrong had wished him to disavow it "upon further consideration." He had refused, and declared he must write according to his convictions or not at all. The matter might possibly have been adjusted, had not the General, with more zeal than discretion, remonstrated with him upon the ground that he should "think twice before giving up a large salary."

There is a very ugly word in the English language of which I, as a child, stood in mortal fear. I had then never read that word anywhere except in the Bible or my Catechism. I had never heard it except in the pulpit. I had an idea that the devil, in whose personality I believed, but of whom I had never thought enough to be afraid, might appear at any moment in connection with that inviting word, if uttered out of church.

Only lately has it been shorn of its terrors by being left out root and branch in the revision of the Bible. Now, although offensive to ears polite, it is no longer supposed to imperil the safety of the soul. Unless refined taste forbids, it may in seasons of peculiar vexation of spirit — *à lâcher la vapeur* — be applied to things inanimate: to a "spot" that will not "out," to tiresome "iteration," to "faint praise," or, on general principles, suitably preface the pronoun "it," but never to living individuals! That would be uncivil to a degree — highly imprudent, and likely to result unpleasantly. There can be no doubt of the fact that it contains certain mysterious elements of relief and comfort, else why its frequent use by men and not infrequent use by some women?

At the time of which I am writing it was to me still a desperate word of evil source and evil omen. Even now the cells of my brain respond with a shudder when I hear it.

You can then imagine the shock I sustained when I learned my husband's reply to the good old General's overture.

"What did you say?" I had sternly demanded.

"Well, if you *will* have it — I said, '*damn* the money!'"

We did not leave Washington immediately. My editor knew he could make good his position in regard to Russia in her quarrel with England, and

Mr. Gales offered him the columns of the *National Intelligencer* for that purpose. He wrote a long and able defence of Russia. Caleb Cushing met him afterward and congratulated him on an article which was, he said, "unanswered and unanswerable."

He was fascinated with editorial life, immediately bought an interest in the *Richmond Enquirer*, and became co-editor with William F. Ritchie. We had inaugurated President Pierce, whose friendship promised much. I had made charming friends in Washington, — Mrs. Gales and Mrs. Seaton, Mrs. Crittenden, beautiful Adele Cutts (afterward Mrs. Douglas), Mrs. "Clem" Clay, and other charming wives of the representatives in Congress. But I was not sorry to leave the city. My dear Blue Mountains were awaiting me. For years I could never return to them without a swelling heart. I was going back for a long visit to my aunt and the baby girl I had lent her (to keep her own dear heart from breaking when I left her), and I had a splendid boy to show my friends in Charlottesville — the old people only — for all my confrères had married and taken wing.

It was not long before Mr. Pierce sent my husband on a special mission to Greece. I could not accompany him. I could not travel with my babies — there were now three — nor could I leave them with my delicate aunt. I went with him as far as Washington, where we spent one day and night. A dinner had been arranged to witness the unfolding of a superb specimen of the *Agave Americana*, supposed to be over fifty years old, and which now, for the first time in the memory of the present generation, had suddenly thrown up a great stalk crowned with a bud nearly a foot long.

We did not attend the dinner, but at midnight, upon answering a knock at the door, there stood a man bearing in his arms the splendid flower. A thick fringe of narrow, pure white petals formed a rosette, and from the centre rose a plume of golden stamens. I was resolved this midnight beauty should not discover the dawn which signals the closing of its petals, so I placed it in the ample fireplace, made a framework of canes, parasols, and umbrellas around it and covered the whole with a blanket. In the morning I peeped in. It presented a tightly twisted spike, having entered upon another long sleep of fifty years, more or less. It was this flower that my husband, with outrageous American boasting, described to Queen Mathilde of Greece as an ordinary floral production of this country, not to be confounded with the commonplace night-blooming Cereus, and fired an ambition in her soul that could hardly have been gratified.

While my husband was absent on his mission, President Pierce spent one day in Charlottesville to visit the tomb and home of Jefferson, the father of his political party. We were then at my aunt's country place, and the President wrote to me regretting he could not go out to see me, and inviting me to spend the one evening of his stay with him and a few friends at his hotel.

I had a delightful evening. He expressed the warmest friendship for the young ambassador to

Greece, and presented me with two beautiful books, bound sumptuously in green morocco and inscribed in his own fine handwriting, from my "friend Franklin Pierce." Those valued books were taken from me when our house was sacked in 1865. They possibly exist somewhere! certainly in the grateful memory of their first owner.

The President had the courtesy to express pleasure in my piano playing. I made him listen to Thalberg's "La Stranièra," Henselt's "Gondola," and "L'Elisir d'Amour"; and I left him with an impression that has never been lost, of his kindness of heart, his captivating voice and manner.

My husband's letters from Greece and from Egypt were extremely interesting, and I preserved them for publication in book form. Alas! they, too, were lost in 1865. Unable to encumber myself when I fled before the bullets in 1865, I sent my little son back under cover of night to draw the box containing them to some safe place away from the buildings and burn them. Thus I lost all records of our active life in Virginia before the eve of surrender, except those preserved in the files of Northern papers.

Passage was taken in the *Pacific* for my husband's return, and I went down to Petersburg that I might be with his family to meet him. The *Pacific* was long overdue before we would acknowledge to each other that we were anxious, — I can hear now, as then, cries of the newsboys, "Here's the *New York Herald*, and no news of the *Pacific*," — repeating like a knell of despair, as they ran down the streets, "*No news of the Pacific! No news of the Pacific!*" At last, when the strain was almost unbearable, my father, Dr. Pryor, ran home with the paper in his hand: "A printed list of the passengers, my dear! Roger's name is not among them!"

It had pleased God to deliver him. He had taken passage on the *Pacific* and sent his baggage ahead of him. When he reached Marseilles, he found his trunks and packages had been opened,— a discourtesy to an ambassador,—and he remained a few days to obtain redress, allowing the *Pacific* to sail without him. That ill-starred steamer never reached home. The story of her fate is held where so many secrets, so many treasures lie—in the bosom of the great deep.

I have told elsewhere something of my husband's residence at Athens. It suffices to state here that he accomplished the object of his mission to the satisfaction of his government, and to his own pleasure and profit. He brought me many beautiful pictures and carvings for the home we now made in Richmond, to say nothing of corals, amber, mosaics, curios, and antiques, silks, laces, velvets, perfumes, etc., to my great content. Soon after his return, the President offered him the mission to Persia, which he declined. We found a pleasant house in Richmond, with ample grounds on either side for the flowers I adored. There we set up our Lares and Penates— happy housekeepers, intent on hospitality.

The great day arrived for our first large dinner-party. Although only men were present, they were friends and neighbors, and I presided; with my courtly uncle, Dr. Thomas Atkinson, at my right hand. We furnished our dinners from our own kitchens in Richmond. In every respect — so my uncle assured me — my first venture was a success. Soup, fish, roast, game, and salad with the perfection of chill demanded by a self-respecting salad. Presently I saw one of the waiters whisper to the host, and an expression of alarm pass over his face. The bread had "given out"! I had not imagined the enormous consumption of bread of which a wine-bibber could be capable. Passing around to the head of the table, the dire story was repeated to me, and it was well I had a physician at my right hand! Utter collapse threatened his young hostess. As to the young host, he rose nobly to the occasion. "Ah! no bread! Then we must eat cake!" Thenceforth at all our dinners a skeleton entered our closet — if an empty bread-tray might be dignified into a skeleton. At every dinner and supper we gave, my husband stood in mortal terror lest the bread should give out — as it really did in very truth not many years later.

I was very fond of a little factotum of my cook, whom I promoted from the kitchen to my personal service. As no bell or knocker could reach the ear in the regions allotted the servants, George was invested in white linen, and with a primer for his entertainment and culture was stationed at the door during visiting hours. He found it difficult to keep awake. My French teacher would throw up his hands when he passed out, "*Mon Dieu! Comme* *il dorme!*" If you have ever seen Valentine's bust of the Nation's Ward, you have seen George; asleep, with his head on his bosom and his spelling-book on the floor. He was of a blackness not to be illustrated by the ace of spades, a crow's wing, or any other sable bird or object, and this circumstance, enhancing the purity of his white linen, made him an attractive and interesting object. George had no imagination. He was nothing if not literal. At one time ice was scarce in Richmond. The water of the James was a rich old-gold color from the mud of the red-clay regions through which some of its tributaries ran, but it was considered wholesome. We filtered it for drinking and for tea through a great Vesuvius stone. Some of the old residents were wont to declare they preferred it to the clear water of the springs, — several of which were in the parks of the city, — complaining that the spring water "lacked body." At the time of the ice famine we filled tubs with this cool, muddy water, and in it kept our bottles of milk. George once brought for my admiration some fine lettuce the cook had bought from a cart.

"Put it in water!" I ordered. Soon afterwards, he entered with several bottles of milk — which I also told him to "put in water." What was my dismay when the cook rushed to my room in great heat: —

"I knowed that fool nigger would give you trouble!"

"Why, what's the poor child done?"

"Po' chile! Little devil, *I* call him! He's done po'ed out all the baby's milk in that yaller water, and seasoned it with lettuce leaves!"

We found the society of Richmond delightful. Southern society has often been described, its members praised or blamed, criticised or admired, according to the point of view; sometimes commended as "stately but condescending, haughty but jovial," possessing high self-appreciation, not often indulging in distasteful egotism; fast friends, generous, hospitable; considering conversation an art to be studied, and fitting themselves with just so much knowledge of literature, science, and art, as might be indispensable for conversation; but withal "cultured, educated men of the world who would meet any visitor on his own favorite ground."

Richmond society has always claimed a certain seclusiveness for itself—not *ex*clusiveness—for nobody properly introduced could visit Richmond without having a dinner or evening party given in his honor. "Taken in?"—of course the entertainers were sometimes "taken in"! That did not signify once in a while.

I remember a portly dame with two showy daughters, always handsomely attired, who managed, at some watering-place, to find favor in the eyes of one of our citizens and obtained an invitation, which was eagerly accepted, to make him a visit. An evening party was given to introduce them. I had my doubts after a conversation with Madame Mère—and expressed them, to the disgust of one of my friends. "Impossible," she said, coolly. After they left, Mr. Price, our leading merchant, presented a large bill for female fineries with which he had unhesitatingly credited Madame, who had departed with her daughters to parts unknown. It was promptly, and without a grimace, paid by their deluded host. I could remember the sweetly apologetic way in which Madame had told me she feared her "girls were a bit overdressed for the small functions in Richmond. In New York, now! But here, of course, there need be no such display as in New York!"

No amusement, except an occasional song from an obliging guest, was provided for our evening parties. Conversation and a good supper, with the one-and-only Pizzini to the fore — this was inducement enough. Not quite as spirituelle as Lady Morgan, we required something more than a lump of sugar to clear the voice. And Pizzini's suppers! His pyramids of glacé oranges, "*non pareil,*" and spun sugar; his ices, his wine jellies, his blanc manges and, ye gods! his terrapin, pickled oysters, and chicken salad! We assembled not much later than nine, and remained as long as it pleased us. Sometimes we acted — "The Honeymoon," or some other little play; Anna Cora Mowatt (Mrs. Ritchie) gave charming tableaux, with recitations; but usually we talked and talked and talked! "Art of conversation?" I suspect art has nothing to do with conversation. When it becomes art, it ceases to be conversation. We did not gossip, either. Personalities were quite, quite out of the question. Our hosts knew to perfection the art of entertaining.

Sometime in the fifties, Charles Astor Bristed wrote his book, entitled, "The Upper Ten Thousand of New York." It appears the world was waiting for some such work. The theme rippled from shore to shore, until within the past few years it seems to have expired with the myth of the Four Hundred. N. P. Willis (wasn't he a bit of a snob himself?) caught with avidity the new departure in Mr. Bristed's book, and eternally harped upon it. From 1852 until the war, and afterward, until the subsidence of the Four Hundred ripple, we have heard a great deal about classes, society; and finally, American manners came to the fore as a subject of journalistic interest. "American manners! Are they improving in grace or dignity?" The question was put to a number of men and women whose experience and frankness could be relied upon. The answers, except for one, were vague and cautious. Nobody likes to appear as a satirist or cynic—and yet nobody is willing to acknowledge that he knows nothing better than what appears at present to be the standard of good breeding, by comparison with the standard twenty or more years ago.

The one honest man revealed by the lamp-light of the inquiring editor remembered the chapter allotted to a contributor in the preparation of "a history of Ireland." The subject of the chapter was dictated—"The Snakes of Ireland"—and it appeared with that heading. It was brief and to the point—"There are no Snakes in Ireland."

"American manners?" answered the one honest man; "there aren't any."

"American manners," said George William Curtis, "where do you find them? If high society be the general intercourse of the highest intelligence with which we converse, — the festival of Wit and Beauty and Wisdom, — we do not find it at Newport. Fine society is a fruit that ripens slowly. We Americans fancy we can buy it."

Foreigners have never ceased to comment upon American manners. The subject in the fifties seems to have been of inexhaustible interest. "There's no use," said Max O'Rell, "in forever gazing at the Upper Ten Thousand. They are alike all over the world. It is the million that differ and are interesting." Marion Crawford said: "The Upper Ten can never fraternize with artists, poets, and inventors. These take no account of wealth or of any position not won by absolute genius or merit, treating such position, indeed, with ill-concealed contempt."

Thackeray liked to be agreeable to the people who made his lectures profitable, but he complains of the "uncommon splendatiousness" of Americans. "But I haven't been in Society yet," he wrote, in 1852; "I haven't met the Upper Ten." Another English writer went farther — much farther — but we forbear. Now these harsh judgments were exclusively of manners in New York, Newport, and Washington. No Curtis, Bristed, or Willis ever, to my knowledge, visited Richmond. Thackeray, Max O'Rell, and Ampère never thought us worth while — so our delightful small society, which had ripened slowly and took no account of wealth, and which could really have furnished a modicum of "Wit, beauty, and Wisdom" for Curtis's "festival," was unrepresented. As to the criticisms of our elder brother across the water, as long as he sends his sons to America to find the mothers of the future peers of his realm, the edge is blunted of his strictures upon American society and manners.

CHAPTER XV

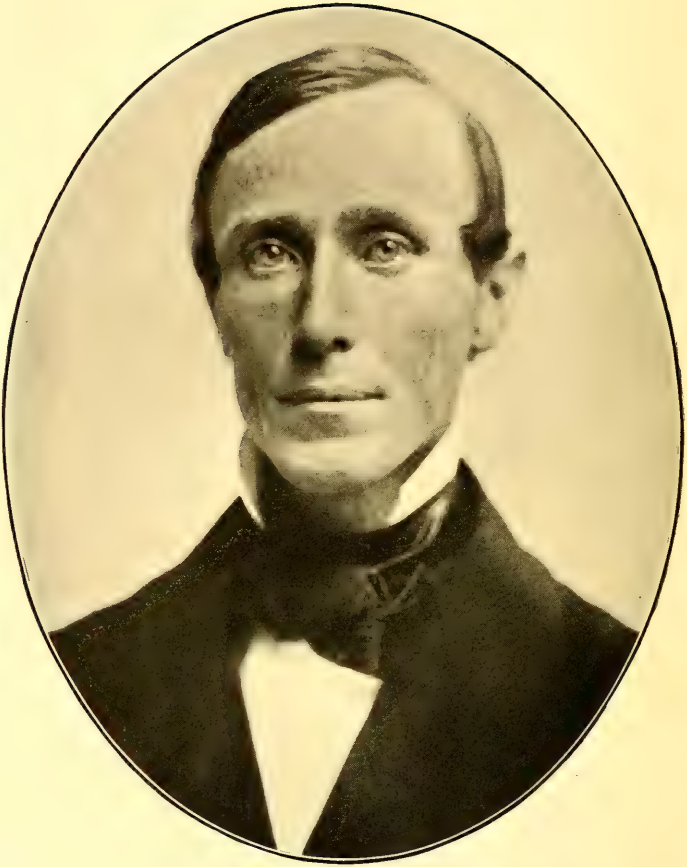
WILLIAM WALKER, the "Grey-eyed Man of Destiny," who was in 1854 more talked about than any other man in the country, was our guest for several days in Richmond. Whether he came to accept a dinner given him by the city, or whether the dinner was the result of the visit, I cannot remember. Although we knew him to be an interesting character, we were unprepared for the throng that filled our house every day while he was with us. Beginning early in the day, they poured in until night, and remained, spellbound by the magnetism of this wonderful man. As we could not invite them to leave for the three o'clock dinner (the dinner-hour in Virginia varied then to suit individual convenience), I took counsel of my blessed old negro cook, and following her advice, I spread a table every day with cold dishes, — tongue, ham, chickens, birds, salads, etc., — to which all were made welcome. The sideboard ably supplemented this informal meal. Old Madeira could be had in those days, and in lieu of the cocktail of the present time, we brewed an appetizer, crowned with "the herb that grows on the grave of good Virginians."

The Richmond market was insufficient for sudden demands. We depended largely upon the small, covered country carts, intercepting them as they passed on their way to the grocers', who bartered things dry and liquid for the farmers' poultry, eggs, and butter. At this time of my distress, no carts hove in sight, but I knew a grocer with a noble soul, — one Mark Downey, — to whom I made a personal appeal, and he promised to send me, daily, everything he could gather, from a roasting pig to a reed-bird. My good cook rose to the occasion: "Ain't that Gin'al gone yet?" was her morning salutation, hastily adding, "Nem-mine, honey! We-all kin git along."

In some of the biographical sketches of William Walker I find him painted as little better — in fact, no better — than a pirate; a man of an unbounded stomach for power and place, regarding as nothing life, property, or his own word, and finally, justly forsaken and punished. Others present him to posterity as a scholar, an author, a graduate of colleges, a student at Heidelberg, also a hero of the first water, brave beyond compare; a maker of republics, statesman, dictator, — in all things fearless and dashing. When I turn to the storehouse of my own memory, I find a modest, courtly gentleman, with a strong but not ungentle face: —

> "The mildest mannered man
> That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat."

Of course I could not appear in the crowd that hung upon his lips all day, but when we gathered around the evening lamp he was never too weary to talk to me — but not about his conquests nor his ambitions. For a woman's ear he had gentler themes than these.



WILLIAM WALKER.

One night I startled my husband by asking, "What church do you belong to, General?"

"I have recently become a Catholic," he answered gravely; "it is the faith for a man like me! I have seen the poor wounded fellows die with great serenity after the ministration of their priest."

I recall a striking remark by the General to my husband. He said men are commonly equally courageous, the difference between them being that one man, from keener sensibility, sees a danger of which another is stolidly insensible. The former is really courageous, while the latter is indifferent from lack of apprehension. Himself incapable of fear, a higher authority on the subject cannot be imagined.

When he took leave of us, he gave me a perfect ambrotype picture of himself, probably the only genuine one extant. "Here I am, Madam, and I've always been called an ugly fellow." I ventured the usual deprecatory remark, but he shook his head: —

"I'm afraid there's no doubt about it! On my way here I heard a man close to my car-window sing out, 'Whar's the Gray-eyed Man of Destiny?' As he was close to me, I leaned out and said in a low tone, '*Here*, my friend!' 'Friend nothin,' he sneered; 'an' you'd better take in your ugly mug.'"

He looked back from the carriage that took him to the depot and answered my waving handkerchief: "Good-by, good-by, dear lady! I'm going to make Nicaragua a nice place, fit for you!"

Just as we were about to engage in our own life-and-death struggle, we heard he had been betrayed, as Napoleon was betrayed, by the English, to whom, after defeat, he had fled for protection, and had met his death bravely.

His dream had been to win Nicaragua, as Houston had won Texas, and then annex it to the United States, thus strengthening the power of the South.

I have been told that many superstitions and legends have sprung up in Nicaragua and Honduras to cluster around the memory of William Walker, but in none is there a firmer belief than that his ghost appears on the anniversary of his death, and will so appear until he is avenged. A Tennessee boy, William G. Erwin, now helping to superintend the digging of the Panama Canal, has told the legend, in Senator Taylor's magazine, from which I select a few verses: —

"*One night each year in Honduras, they clear the roads for his ghost,*
Their long dead Gringo President — who rides with his phantom host.
He sweeps o'er the land in silence and the cowering natives hide,
From the Wraith of William Walker — who haunts the land where he died.

"Thus it was the wild tale started — that when dying on the sand,
Walker smiled and sternly told them, 'Till avenged I'll haunt your land!'
And now on snow-white stallion once a year at midnight's spell,
Across the land from sea to sea — rides the form that all know well.

"His head is high, his blade is bare, his white steed spurns the ground,
A phantom troop charge close behind — but all make never a sound;
While his blood cries yet for vengeance against this murderous herd —
He will ever come to warn them, that the day is but deferred.

"'To the sons of old Honduras as they view him through the gloom,
The Gray-eyed Man of Destiny looks the Avatar of Doom;
In his face they read a warning like the writing on the wall,
'Tis, '*Beware, one day the Gringos will avenge their chieftain's fall!*'"

My husband entered with great zeal and efficiency into the fight against "The Know-nothing party," or, as they proudly styled themselves, the "American party."

The principles of this party were naturally evolved from the fact that the ignorant foreign vote was influencing elections[1] in the cities, that votes were freely sold, and that drunken aliens frequently had charge of the polls. The mythical order of Washington in a time of peculiar danger was remembered: "Put none but Americans on guard to-night!"

It seemed reasonable and fitting that Americans, who had won this country from the savage, and fought all its early battles with the French and English, should govern the country they had redeemed. One thing led to another, until it was resolved to form a secret society, with the view of excluding all foreigners and many Roman Catholics from any part in the councils of the nation.

This, briefly, seems to have been at the root of the great Know-nothing movement. The immediate and practical aim in view was that foreigners and Catholics should be excluded from all national, state, county, and municipal offices; that strenuous efforts should be made to change the naturalization laws, so that the immigrant could not become a citizen until a resident of twenty-one years in this country. My husband at once perceived the pernicious tendency of the movement, which was sweeping the Northern states with resistless force. Secret lodges were formed everywhere, secret ceremonies inaugurated — grip, passwords, and signs. The country was in a ferment of excitement, followed by outrageous lawlessness. Bands of women made raids on bar-rooms and smashed the glasses, broke the casks, and poured the liquor into the streets. Our one exemplar of similar enterprises should have lived in those days! Garrison burned the Constitution of the United States at an open-air meeting in Framingham, Massachusetts; and the crowd, in spite of a few hisses, shouted "Amen." A mob broke into the enclosure around the Washington Monument, and broke the beautiful block of marble from the Temple of Concord at Rome, which had been sent by the pope as a tribute to Washington. A street preacher, styling himself the Angel Gabriel, incited a crowd at Chelsea, Massachusetts, to deeds of violence. They smashed the windows of the Catholic church, tore the cross from the gable and shivered it to atoms. These were only a few of the outrages growing out of the excitement engendered by the Know-nothing party.

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[1] History of James Ford Rhodes, *passim*.

The *Enquirer* always claimed the credit of unearthing and exposing the signals, passwords, and ceremonies of the society. "I don't know" was one of the answers to the "grip" when brother met brother, and hence the popular name of the organization. Though Virginia had but few Catholics and few immigrants, yet, upon principle, she withstood and stayed the Know-nothing torrent that had hitherto swept over every other state.

Party feeling ran high during the election of a Virginia governor, and the junior editor of the *Enquirer* bore his part boldly and with vigor. For the first few years of his editorial life he devoted himself to study, confining himself closely to his office. A contemporary writer says of him: "Pryor evidently studied the highest standards in his reading, and his editorials were a revelation of strength and purity in classic English. It was impossible, however, for a man of his tastes and force not to drift into politics outside of the sanctum of his paper, and the public soon recognized him as one of the ablest and most eloquent speakers upon the hustings and in the bitter discussions that marked the proceedings of every gathering of the people in those years. In the mutterings and threatenings of the storm that was soon to break in fury upon a hitherto peaceful and peace-loving land, he found abundant opportunity for the cultivation and display of those rare powers of oratory in debate which subsequently forced him to the front of the forum."[1] I can only add to this tribute from a candid historian of the time one observation — the success was great: the memory of it sweet, but — it was bought with a price! The stern price of unremitting labor and self-abnegation.

It was a terrible time in Virginia. Henry A. Wise was the Anti-Know-nothing candidate for governor, and hard and valiant was the fight my husband made for his election. It involved him in two duels — not bloodless, but, thank God, not fatal. It is unnecessary to allude to my own fearful anxiety. It will be understood by all women who, like myself, have been and are sufferers from the false standard demanded by the "code of honor," in countries where, to ignore it, would mean ruin and disgrace. We were most devoted adherents of Mr. Wise, and ready to go to the death in his defence, standing as he did in the front, as we believed, of the battle for right, justice, and humanity. Finally, he was triumphantly elected, the pestilent society quenched, and comparative peace for a brief period reigned in Virginia.

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[1] Claiborne's "Seventy Years in Virginia."

The Democratic party was grateful for my husband's hard work, and gave him a beautiful service of silver, inscribed with the appreciation of the party for his "brilliant talents, eminent worth, and distinguished service."

Not long afterward he became the editor of *The Richmond South*, for which I had the honor to select a motto — "*Unum et commune periclum una salus*." Perhaps a pen picture of my "Harry Hotspur," as he was called, may amuse those whose kind eyes follow his venerable figure as it passes to-day. "The day after our arrival at the Red Sweet Springs we noticed among a crowd of gentlemen a face which strikingly contrasted with the faces around him. He was a slight figure, with a set of features remarkable for their intellectual cast; a profusion of dark hair falling from his brow in long, straight masses over the collar of his coat gave a student-like air to his whole appearance. We unconsciously rose to our feet on hearing his name, and found ourselves in the actual presence of the far-famed editor of the *South* and in such close vicinity, too! Why, our awe increased almost to trepidation; we felt as if locked in a vault full of inflammable gas, likely to explode with the first light introduced into it. Indeed, five minutes wore away in preliminary explanations before we could be brought to identify the youthful person before us — who might pass for a student of divinity or a young professor of moral philosophy — with the fiery and impetuous editor of the *Richmond South*. He is, we believe, considered one of the ablest political writers in all the South, and his articles were said to be highly influential in the late party controversy. For ourselves we regard with admiration," etc. "His young family cannot fail to create an immediate interest in the eyes of the most casual observer. . . . And then his beautiful, noble-looking children; they might serve as models for infant Apollos, such as Thorwaldsen or Flaxman might have prayed for."

They *were* lovely — my boys — my three little boys!

CHAPTER XVI

A BIT of paper, yellow and crumbling from age, has recently been sent to me by the son of an old Charlottesville friend. The tiny scrap has survived the vicissitudes of fifty-one years, and because of the changes it has seen and the dangers it has passed, if for nothing more, it deserves preservation. It marks an important era in our life, although it contains only this: —

"CHARLOTTESVILLE, July 1, 1858.

"DEAR MRS. COCHRAN: —

"May I have your receipt for brandy-peaches? You know Roger is speaking all over the country, trying to win votes for a seat in Congress. I'm not sure he will be elected — but I *am* sure he will like some brandy-peaches! If he is successful, they will enhance the glory of victory — if he is defeated, they will help to console him.

"Affectionately,
"S. A. PRYOR."

In this campaign my husband established his reputation as an orator. He was canvassing the district of his kinsman, John Randolph of Roanoke, and old men who heard his speeches did not hesitate to declare him the equal of the eccentric but eloquent Randolph. I always like to quote directly from the journals of the day, — I like my countrymen to tell my story, — and happily, although I lost all memoranda, some old men have written since the war of the noted Virginians whom they knew in the fifties. One from a North Carolina paper I have preserved, but lost the precise date.

"The late Rev. Thos. G. Lowe, of Halifax, was the greatest natural orator North Carolina ever produced. He was silver-tongued and golden-mouthed, a cross between Chrysostom and Fénelon. He was, besides, a very earnest Whig in his politics. On one occasion, in 1860, we knew him to go from Halifax to Henderson, a distance of some sixty miles, to hear Pryor speak. We asked him what he thought of the Virginian. His reply was, 'You think I didn't stand up in a hot sun three mortal hours just to hear him abuse my party? He is wonderful, with the finest vocabulary I have ever known.' Charles Bruce, Esq., of Charlotte, Virginia, told us, in 1870, that when Pryor spoke at Charlotte Court House, he saw elderly gentlemen who had ridden forty miles in their carriages to hear him, and who said to each other, after the great orator had concluded his masterly effort, 'We have had no such speaking in Virginia since John Randolph's day.'"

Another from the old district writes, July 9, 1891: —

> "Of all the men I ever heard speak, Pryor made the strongest impression on me. Young, enthusiastic, brilliant; with a not unbecoming faith in a capacity of high order, he might reasonably have aspired to the loftiest dignities. He was a born orator; thorough master of those rare persuasive powers that captivate and lead multitudes. His figure was erect and finely proportioned, his gestures easy and graceful,

his features mobile and expressive of every shade of emotion. But the charm of his oratory lay in his wonderfully organized vocal apparatus, which he played upon with the skill of a musical expert. No speaker of the present time can claim to rival him in the easy flow of rhetoric that sparkled through his harmoniously balanced periods, except, probably, Senator Daniel. While listening to him, the Richard Henry Lee of Wirt's graphic portraiture seemed to move and speak in every tone and gesture."

Another for the *Richmond Times-Democrat* of November 2, 1902, writes: —

"A famous orator of the antebellum period was Roger A. Pryor, who still survives. He had a poetic imagination, which is the basis of all true oratory. His vocabulary, though florid, was superb, and kept company with the airy creatures of his exuberant imagination. He rarely spoke but to evolve a beautiful figure, and in his political campaigns for Congress, in the now Fourth Virginia district, he frequently soared above the comprehension of his audience, whose reading was limited. He combined a logical mind with his poetic fancy, and the effect and product of his thought were striking and impressive, illustrating the aphorism that the poet always sees most deeply into human nature. Pryor had the face, the figure, the dramatic air, the attitude, and the vocabulary. When we saw him last summer at the White Sulphur, he looked the grave and dignified jurist, in contrast with the typical politician and editor of the fire-eating school of fifty years ago."

While all these fine speeches were delighting our Democratic friends, I was very happy with my dear aunt at her country place, Rock Hill, near Charlottesville. There my dear son Roger was born —

now my only son. The house, like a small Swiss chalet, was perched lightly on the side of an elevation that well deserved its name. From the crest of the hill there was a noble view of the Blue Mountains, and of sunsets indescribable. To the little boy and girl who spent their childhood at this place it soon became enchanted ground. A quarry, from which stone had been taken for building the house, was the cave of Bunyan's giants, Pope and Pagan, who "hailed the Christians as they passed, saying, 'Turn in hither'"; two crayfish that lived in the great spring under the Druidical oaks were the genii of the fountain; the corn-field was a mighty forest to be entered with fear because of the Indians and wild beasts therein.

These two children, Gordon and her brother, Theodorick, fourteen months younger, were blessed in having my own dear aunt's care and teaching from their infancy until they were aged respectively nine and ten years. They were not at first "remarkable" children. They were not infant phenommena, subjected to the perilous applause of admiring friends and kindred. They were normal in every respect — clean-blooded, sturdy, and wholesome; with good appetites, cool heads, and quick perceptions. They became, under the care of their wise preceptor, unusually interesting and intelligent children. My aunt adored the children, firmly believing that, however degeneracy might have impaired the human race in its progress of evolution, — these two at least had been made in God's image. In the words of their nurse, she "tuned them as if they were little harps — just to see how sweet the music could be!" They studied together — Gordon understanding that she must encourage the little brother, and read to him until he could read himself. In summer the schoolroom was sometimes *al fresco*, even drawing upon the knotted branches of the cherry tree for desks!

Gordon read very well at the age of three. She was also taught, before she could read, to point out rivers and cities on a map. Before he was four, Theodorick could read also. The children never had a distasteful task. I heard a great scholar say that *all* learning could be made charming to a young mind. The aunt of these children made their lessons a reward. "Now be good when you dress, and you may have a lesson," or "if Gordon and Theo don't ask for anything, I will give them a lesson right after dinner." The lessons, through the teacher's skill and patience, were made delightful. At once they were given paper and pencils, colored and plain, and both wrote before they were five. Their teacher disapproved of gory tales of giants and hobgoblins. Instead of these, they had histories quite as thrilling, and stories of the animal kingdom, with which they lived in perfect amity and kinship. They never had caged birds, but ducks and chickens, dogs small and great, cats and kittens, were all regarded as part of the family, and bore historic names. Theo once picked up (he was three) a small chicken, whereupon the mother hen rose to his shoulders and administered a good spanking with her wings. A servant, with great heat, belabored the hen; and Theo checked his sobs to entreat for her, explaining, "she didn't like for me to love her little white chicken." The hen, forsooth, was jealous! He once caught a bee in his hand and received a stinging rebuke. "How could you be so silly?" exclaimed his little sister. "Not at all," said Theo; "I have often done the same thing — but this little fellow," he added affectionately, "this little fellow had a brier in *his* tail!" Their aunt hesitated whether she should tell them harrowing stories from history, but experiment proved, however, that the heroic held for them such fascination that they lost sight completely of the pain or suffering attending it. They adored the men and women who died bravely, but had their favorites. Lady Jane Grey was not one, nor Mary Queen of Scots (perhaps because of their ruffs), but they worshipped Marie Antoinette and Charles I. They had a very high regard for honor and fair dealing. Theo was a little over three years when he complained to me of his little sister, "I just laid my head on the stool and let her chop it off — because I am Charles I — and now *she* is Marie Antoinette, and when I am ready to cut off her head, she screams and runs away." His sense of justice was outraged, but the little sister's vivid imagination made her nervous, notwithstanding the fact that a cushion was the guillotine! Having observed that a large knotted stick was treated with respect, and travelled, to my inconvenience, with Theo on several journeys, I essayed to throw it away. With great dignity he gravely informed me, "This is

Rameses III." Not only was it one of the Egyptian kings, but the richest of them all. I wish I could follow these two fascinating children beyond their babyhood, but I cannot venture! I dare not!

Late in the autumn I left Rock Hill to visit my uncle at the Oaks in Charlotte. I had travelled alone from Richmond to Mossingford, ten or twelve miles from my uncle's house, and there old Uncle Peter met me with the great high-swung chariot and a hamper well filled with broiled partridges, biscuits, cakes, and fruit. The rain had poured a steady flood for several days, but to my joy the clouds were now rolling away in heavy masses, and the sun shining hotly on the water-soaked earth.

"We got to hurry, Mistis," said the old coachman, as we prepared to enjoy an *al fresco* luncheon; "the cricks was risin' mighty fas' when I come along fo' sun-up dis mornin'."

"But we don't have to cross the river, Uncle Peter?"

"Gawd A'mighty, no," exclaimed the old man. "Ef'n I had to cross Staunton River, I'd done give clean up, fo' I see you! When we git home, we'll fine out what ole Staunton River doin'. I lay she's jes' a'bilin'!"

"Well, then there is some danger?"

"Who talkin' 'bout danger? De kerridge sets mighty high. No'm, der ain't no danger, but I ain't trustin' dem cricks. I knows cricks! Dee kin swell deeself up as big's a river in no time!"

We had not gone far before we were overtaken by a mud-splashed horseman, who arrested our horses and spoke in a low tone to the driver. Presently he appeared at the carriage window. "This is Mrs. Pryor? You remember Mr. Carrington? I hope I see you well, Madam. I am on my way to vote for your husband — or rather, help elect him. We have a fine day; the polls need not be kept open to-morrow. But I must hasten on. We will soon have the pleasure of congratulating our congressman."

"One moment, please, Mr. Carrington! Are the creeks too high for us to cross?"

"I think not, Madam. The carriage hangs high, and Peter knows all about freshets. Good morning."

There were swollen streams for us to cross. Several of them had overflowed the meadows until they looked like lakes. At one or two the water flowed over the floor of the carriage, and we gathered our feet under us on the seats. My little Theo enjoyed it, but my poor nurse was ashen from terror. Very wet, very cold, and very grateful were we when at night we reached our haven. My dear uncle, Dr. Rice, was already there, with cheering news from the polls.

The next morning we looked out upon a turbid yellow sea. The Staunton had sustained her reputation, overflowed her low banks, and spread herself generously over the face of the earth. It was a week or more before my husband was assured of his election. He spent the intervening days of rest sleeping — like the boy he was!

Several years later, when he was reëlected, we were in Richmond with my little family. Gordon and the two little boys were keen politicians. Of course I was now too busy a mother to concern myself with politics, as was my wont in the earlier days. Moreover, I knew my congressman would be reëlected. I was pretty sure by this time that he would always be elected — so the day passed serenely with me. I was overwhelmed with dismay when one of his friends called after the polls closed at sunset, and informed me that a torch-light procession would reach our house about eight o'clock, and would expect to find it illuminated.

"Illuminated!" I exclaimed. "And pray with what? There are not half a dozen candles in the house, and the stores are all closed. Besides, the baby will be asleep. It is bad for babies to be waked out of their first sleep."

My friend did not contradict me, but in the evening he sent a bushel of small turnips and a box of candles, with a note telling me to cut a hole in the turnips, insert a candle, and they would answer my purpose admirably. Everybody went to work with a will, and when the crowd, shouting and cheering, surrounded us, every window-pane blazed a welcome into the happy faces. My young congressman made one of his charming speeches, and then — the lights went out on the last election he was destined to celebrate! True, he was twice after elected to Congress — in the Confederate States; for the South had need of him in her legislative hall as well as in the field. In both he gave her all his heart and soul and strength, but the days were too sad for illuminations in his honor.

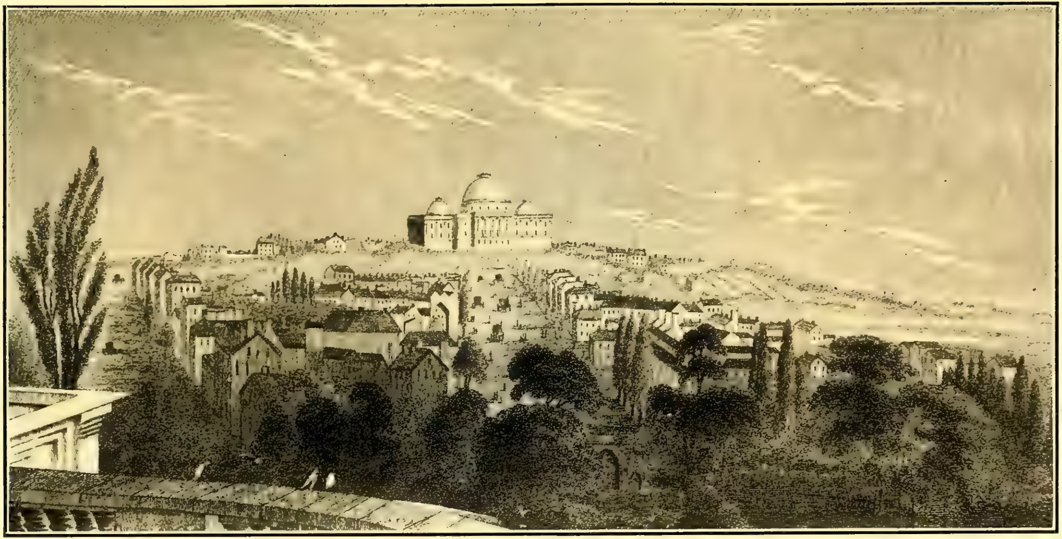
* * * * * *

My story has now reached the period at which my "Reminiscences of Peace and War" begin. I shall not relate the political history of the period — which has been better told by others than I can hope to tell it. I shall endeavor to bring forward some things that were omitted in my late book, but in narrating the incidents of the Civil War and the preceding life in Washington, I may in some measure repeat myself. For this I have a valid excuse. Apologizing for quoting himself from a former book on Edmund Burke, John Morley remarks: "Though you may say what you have to say well *once*, you cannot so say it *twice*." Lord Morley strengthens his position by a quotation in Greek, which, unhappily, remains Greek to me, and I therefore cannot avail myself of its help, but I am glad to be sustained by his example. Besides, what says Oliver Wendell Holmes? "It is the height of conceit for an author to be afraid of repeating himself — because it implies that everybody has read — and remembers — what he has said before."

CHAPTER XVII

WASHINGTON was like a great village in the days of President Pierce and President Buchanan. My own pride in the federal city was such that my heart would swell within me at every glimpse of the Capitol: from the moment it rose like a white cloud above the smoke and mists, as I stood on the deck of the steamboat (having run up from my dinner to salute Mount Vernon), to the time when I was wont to watch from my window for the sunset, that I might catch the moment when a point on the unfinished dome glowed like a great blazing star after the sun had really gone down. No matter whether suns rose or set, there was the star of our country, — the star of our hearts and hopes.

When our friends came up from Virginia to make us visits, it was delightful to take a carriage and give up days to sight-seeing; to visit the White House and Capitol, the Patent Office, with its miscellaneous treasures; to point with pride to the rich gifts from crowned heads which our adored first President was too conscientious to accept; to walk among the stones lying around the base of the unfinished monument and read the inscriptions from the states presenting them; to spend a day at the Smithsonian Institution, and to introduce our friends to its president, Mr. Henry; and to Mr. Spenser Baird and Mr. George, who were giving their lives to the study



Washington in 1845.

of birds, beasts, and fishes, — finding them, as Mr. George still contended, "so much more interesting than men," adding hastily, "We do not say ladies," and blushing after the manner of cloistered scholars; to hint of interesting things about Mr. George, who was a melancholy young man, and who had, as we know, sustained a great sorrow.

Then the visits to the galleries of the House and Senate Chamber, and the honor of pointing out the great men to our friends from rural districts; the long listening to interminable speeches, not clearly understood, but heard with a reverent conviction that all was coming out right in the end, that everybody was really working for the good of his country, and that we belonged to it all and were parts of it all.

This was the thought behind all other thoughts which glorified everything around us, enhanced every fortunate circumstance, and caused us to ignore the real discomforts of life in Washington: the cold, the ice-laden streets in winter; the whirlwinds of dust and driving rains of spring; the swift-coming fierceness of summer heat; the rapid atmospheric changes which would give us all these extremes in one week, or even one day, until it became the part of prudence never to sally forth on any expedition without "a fan, an overcoat, and an umbrella."

The social life in Washington was almost as variable as the climate. At the end of every four years the kaleidoscope turned, and lo! — a new central jewel and new colors and combinations in the setting.

But behind this "floating population," as the political circles were termed, there was a fine society in the fifties of "old residents" who held themselves apart from the motley crowd of office-seekers. This society was sufficient to itself, never seeking the new, while accepting it occasionally with discretion, reservations, and much discriminating care. The sisters, Mrs. Gales and Mrs. Seaton, wives of the editors of the *National Intelligencer*, led this society. Mrs. Gales's home was outside the city, and thence every day Mr. Gales was driven in his barouche to his office. His paper was the exponent of the Old Line Whigs (the Republican party was formed later), and in stern opposition to the Democrats. It was, therefore, a special and unexpected honor for a Democrat to be permitted to drive out to "the cottage" for a glass of wine and a bit of fruit-cake with Mrs. Gales and Mrs. Seaton. Never have I seen these gentlewomen excelled in genial hospitality. Mrs. Gales was a handsome woman and a fine conversationalist. She had the courteous repose born of dignity and intelligence and a certain reticence which makes for distinction. She was literally her husband's right hand, — he had lost his own, — and was the only person who could decipher his left-hand writing. So that when anything appeared from his pen it had been copied by his wife before it reached the type-setter. A fine education this for an intelligent woman; the very best schooling for a social life including diplomats from foreign countries, politicians of diverse opinions, artists, authors, musicians, women of fashion, to entertain whom required infinite tact, cleverness, and an intimate acquaintance with the absorbing questions of the day.

Of course the levees and state receptions, which were accessible to all, required none of these things. The rôle of hostess on state occasions could be filled creditably by any woman of ordinary physical strength, patience, self-control, who knew when to be silent.

Washington society, at the time of which I write, was comparatively free from non-official men of wealth from other cities who, weary with the monotonous round of travel, — to the Riviera, to Egypt, to Monte Carlo, — are attracted by the unique atmosphere of a city holding many foreigners, and devoted not to commercial but to social and political interests. The doors of the White House and Cabinet offices being open on occasions to all, they have opportunities denied them in their own homes. Society in Washington in the fifties was peculiarly interesting in that it was composed exclusively of men whose presence argued them to have been of importance at home. They had been elected by the people, or chosen by the President, or selected among the very best in foreign countries, or they belonged to the United States Army or Navy service, or to the descendants of the select society which had gathered in the city early in its history.[1]

As I had come to Washington from Virginia, where everybody's great-grandfather knew my great-grandfather, where the rules of etiquette were only those of courtesy and good breeding, I had many a troubled moment in my early Washington life, lest I should transgress some law of precedence, etc. I wisely took counsel with one of my "old residents," and she gave me a few simple rules whereby the young chaperon of a very young girl might be guided: "My dear," said this lady, "my dear, you know you cannot always have your husband to attend you. It will be altogether proper for you to go with your sister to morning and afternoon receptions. When you arrive, send for the host or the master of ceremonies, and he will take you in and present you. Of course, your husband will take you to balls; if he is busy, you simply cannot go! I think you would do well to make a rule *never*, under any circumstances, to drive in men's carriages. There are so many foreigners here, you must be careful. They never bring their own court manners to Washington. They take their cue from the people they meet. If you are high and haughty, they will be high and haughty. If you are genially civil but reserved, they will be so. If you talk personalities in a free and easy way, they will spring some audacious piece of scandal on you, and the Lord only knows where they'll end."

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[1] "Reminiscences of Peace and War," *passim.*

Now, it so happened that I had just received a request from a Frenchman who had brought letters to be allowed to escort Madame and Mademoiselle to a fête in Georgetown. We were to drive through the avenue of blossoming crab-apples, and rendezvous at a spring for a picnic. I forget the name of our hostess, but she had arranged a gay festival, including music and dancing on the green. I had accepted this invitation and the escort of M. Raoul, and received a note from him asking at what hour he should have the honor, etc., and I immediately ran home and wrote that "Madame would be happy to see M. Raoul *à trois heures*" — and that Madame asked the privilege of using her own horses, etc. I made haste to engage an open carriage, and congratulated myself on my clever management.

The afternoon was delicious. Monsieur appeared on the moment, and we waited for my carriage. The gay equipages of other members of the party drove up and waited for us. Presently, rattling down the street, came an old ramshackle "night-hawk," bearing the mud-and-dust scars of many journeys, the seats ragged and tarnished, raw-boned horses with rat-eaten manes and tails, harness tied with rope, — the only redeeming feature the old negro on the box, who, despite his humiliating *entourage*, had the air of a gentleman.

What could I do? There was nothing to be done!

Monsieur handed me in without moving a muscle of his face, handed in my sister, entered himself, and spoke no word during the drive. He conducted us gravely to the place of rendezvous, silently and gravely walked around the grounds with us, silently and gravely brought us home again.

I grew hot and cold by turns, and almost shed tears of mortification. I made no apology — what could I say? Arriving at my own door, I turned and invited my escort to enter. He raised his hat, and with an air of the deepest dejection, dashed with something very like sarcastic humility, said he trusted Madame had enjoyed the afternoon, — thanked her for the honor done himself, — and only regretted the disappointment of the French Minister, the Count de Sartiges, at not having been allowed to serve Madame with his own state coach, which had been placed at his disposal for Madame's pleasure!

As he turned away, my chagrin was such I came very near forgetting to give my coachman his little "tip."

I began, "Oh, Uncle, how *could* you?" when he interrupted: "Now Mistis, don't you say nothin'; I knowed dis ole fune'al hack warn't fittin' for you, but der warn't nar another kerridge in de stable. De boss say, 'Go 'long, Jerry, an' git er dar!' — an' I done done it! An' I done fotch 'er back, too!"

I never saw M. Raoul afterward. There's no use crying over spilt milk, or broken eggs, or French monsieurs, or even French counts and ministers. I soon left for Virginia, and to be relieved of the dread of meeting M. Raoul softened my regret at leaving Washington.

I am sorry I cannot, at length, describe the brilliant society of Washington during the few years preceding the Civil War. I have done this elsewhere, and need not repeat it here. But for the anxieties engendered by the exciting questions of the day, my own happiness would have been complete. I found and made many friends. My husband was appreciated, my children healthy and good, my home delightful. Many of the brilliant men and women assembled in Washington were known to me more or less intimately, and everybody was kind to me. President Buchanan early noticed and invited me. "The President," said Mr. Dudley Mann, "admires your husband and wonders why you were not at the levee. He has asked me to see that you come to the next one." I once ventured to send him a Virginia ham, with directions for cooking it. It was to be soaked overnight, gently boiled three or four hours, suffered to get cold in its own juices, and then toasted. This would seem simple enough, but the executive cook disdained it, perhaps for the reason that it was so simple. The dish, a shapeless, jelly-like mass, was placed before the President. He took his knife and fork in hand to honor the dish by carving it himself, looked at it helplessly, and called out, "Take it away! Take it away! Oh, Miss Harriet! You are a poor housekeeper! Not even a Virginia lady can teach you."

The glass dishes of the épergne contained wonderful "French kisses" — two-inch squares of crystallized sugar wrapped in silver paper, and elaborately decorated with lace and artificial flowers. I was very proud at one dinner when the President said to me, "Madam, I am sending you a souvenir for your little daughter," and a waiter handed me one of those gorgeous affairs. He had questioned me about my boys, and I had told him of my daughter Gordon, eight years old, who lived with her grandmother. "You must bring her to see Miss Harriet," he had said — which, in due season, I did; an event, with its crowning glory of a checked silk dress, white hat and feather, which she proudly remembers to this day. Having been duly presented at court, the little lady was much "in society," and accompanied me to many brilliant afternoon functions.

She was a thoughtful listener to the talk in her father's library, and once, when an old politician spoke sadly of a possible rupture of the United States, surprised and delighted him by slipping her hand in his and saying, "Never mind! *United* will spell *Untied* just as well" — a little *mot* which was remembered and repeated long afterward.

An interesting time was the arrival in Washington of the first Japanese Embassy that visited this country. All Washington was crazy over the event. I have told elsewhere of my own childish behavior upon that occasion — when, not having much of a head to speak of, I lost the little I had. Having already cared for the health of my soul by honest confession, I need not repeat it here. I was nervous lest the Japanese dignitaries should recognize me as the effusive lady who had met them *en route*, but I carefully avoided wearing in their presence the bonnet and gown they had seen, and if they remembered they gave no sign.

Washington lost *its* head! There was something ridiculous in the way it behaved. So many fêtes were given to the Japanese, so many dinners, so many receptions, we were worn out attending them. "I don't know what we have come here for," said one senator to another; "there's nothing whatever done at the House." "*I* know," his friend replied; "we came here to wait on the Japanese at table."

At the end of one of the balls given them I had seated myself at the door of an anteroom, while my husband was struggling for his carriage in the street. Across the room Miss Lane, with her party, also waited. A young man whom I had seen in society, but whose name I had not heard, approached me, and commenced a harangue of tender sympathy for my neglected position, — so young, so fair, so innocent! Oh, where, where was the miscreant who should protect me? Why, why could I not have been given to one who could have appreciated me — whose life and soul would have been mine, and more in the same strain. I did not, in accordance with stage proprieties, exclaim, "Unhand me, villain!" At first I affected not to hear, but finally rose, crossed the room, and joined Miss Lane. She had not heard, and I did not deem the incident, although novel and most annoying, important enough for inquiry. I did not know him, there was no need for investigation — no call for pistols and coffee.

A few days after I saw him again at the Baron de Limbourg's garden-party. I had joined with Lord Lyons and the Prince de Joinville in the toast to Miss Lane, pledged in the famous thousand-dollar-a-drop "Rose" wine, and was again in the foyer waiting for my carriage when my would-be champion again approached me. "Mrs. Pryor," he said in calm, measured tones, "I am Lieutenant ——. I feel perfectly sure you will grant my request. Take my arm and go with me to speak to Miss Lane."

I instantly divined his intention. Walking up to Miss Harriet, he said penitently: "Miss Lane, you witnessed my intrusion upon Mrs. Pryor the other evening and her exquisite forbearance. In your presence I humbly beg her pardon." He had, poor fellow, found General Cass's wines too potent for him. He had "lost his head" — that was all. I knew somebody whose head had been by no means a sure fixture without the excuse of General Cass's fine wines. Dear Miss Lane, so thoroughly equipped for her high position by her residence at the court of St. James, had only kindness then and ever for the wife of the young Virginia congressman. Years afterward, when both our heads were gray, we talked together of these amusing little events in our Washington life.

Memory lingers upon the delightful friends who made my Washington life beautiful: Miss Lane, Mrs. Douglas, Lady Napier, Mrs. Horace Clarke (*nêe* Vanderbilt), lovely Mrs. Cyrus H. M'Cormick, Mrs. Yulee, the Ritchies, the Masons, Secretary Cass's family, Mrs. Canfield, Mrs. Ledyard, and my prime favorite, Lizzie Ledyard. Ah! they were charming and kind! Even after social lines were strictly drawn between North and South, I had the good fortune to retain my Northern friends. All this I love to remember and would enjoy writing all over again, were it possible *twice* to give time to social records. Nor can I pause to do more than hint at the spirit of the Thirty-sixth Congress, the struggles, vituperation, intemperate speech, honest efforts of the wise members.

The nomination of Lincoln and Hamlin on a purely sectional platform aroused such excitement all over the land that the Senate and House of Representatives gave themselves entirely to speeches on the state of the country. Read at this late day, many of them appear to be the high utterances of patriots, pleading with each other for forbearance. Others exhausted the vocabulary of coarse vituperation. "Nigger thief," "slave-driver" were not uncommon words. Others still, although less unrefined, were not less abusive. Newspapers no longer reported a speech as calm, convincing, logical, or eloquent — these were tame expressions. The terms now in use were: "a torrent of scathing denunciation," "withering sarcasm," "crushing invective," the orator's eyes the while "blazing with scorn and indignation." Young members ignored the salutation of old senators. Mr. Seward's smile after such a rebuff was maddening! No opportunity for scornful allusion was lost. My husband was probably the first congressman to wear "the gray," a suit of domestic cloth having been presented to him by his constituents. Immediately a Northern member said, in an address on the state of the country, "Virginia, instead of clothing herself in sheep's wool, had better don her appropriate garb of sackcloth and ashes." In pathetic contrast to these scenes were the rosy, cherubic little pages, in white blouses and cambric collars, who flitted to and fro, bearing, with smiling faces, dynamic notes and messages from one representative to another. They represented the future which these gentlemen were engaged in wrecking — for many of these boys were sons of Southern widows, who even now, under the most genial skies, led lives of anxiety and struggle. Thoroughly alarmed, the women of Washington thronged the galleries of the House and the Senate-chamber. From morning until the hour of adjournment we would sit spellbound, as one after another drew the lurid picture of disunion and war.

When my husband's time came to speak on "the state of the country," he entreated for a pacific settlement of our controversy. "War," he urged, "war means widows and orphans." The temper of the speech was all for peace. He made a noble appeal to the North for concession. He prophesied (the dreamer) that the South could never be subdued by resort to arms! My Northern friends were prompt to congratulate me upon his speech on "the state of the country," and to praise it with generous words as "calm, free from vituperation, eloquent in pleading for peace and forbearance."

The evening after this speech was delivered we were sitting in the library, on the first floor of our home, when there was a ring at the door-bell. The servants were in a distant part of the house, and such was our excited state that I ran to the door and answered the bell myself. It was snowing fast, a carriage stood at the door, and out of it bundled a mass of shawls and woollen scarfs. On entering, a man-servant commenced unwinding the bundle, which proved to be the Secretary of State, General Cass! We knew not what to think. He was seventy-seven years old. Every night at nine o'clock it was the custom of his daughter, Mrs. Canfield, to wrap him in flannels and put him to bed. What had brought him out at midnight? As soon as he entered, before sitting down, he exclaimed: "Mr. Pryor, I have been hearing about secession for a long time — and I would not listen. But now I am frightened, sir, I am frightened! Your speech in the House to-day gives me some hope. Mr. Pryor! I crossed the Ohio when I was sixteen years old with but a pittance in my pocket, and this glorious Union has made me what I am. I have risen from my bed, sir, to implore you to do what you can to avert the disasters which threaten our country with ruin."

We had this solemn warning to report to our Southern friends who assembled many an evening in our library: R. M. T. Hunter, Muscoe Garnett, Porcher Miles, L. Q. C. Lamar, Boyce, Barksdale of Mississippi, Keitt of South Carolina, with perhaps some visitors from the South. Then Susan would light her fires and show us the kind of oysters that could please her "own white folks," and James would bring in lemons and hot water, with some choice brand of old Kentucky.

These were not convivial gatherings. These men held troubled consultations on the state of the country, — the real meaning and intent of the North, the half-trusted scheme of Judge Douglas to allow the territories to settle for themselves the vexed question of slavery within their borders, the right of peaceable secession. The dawn would find them again and again with but one conclusion, — they would stand together: "*Unum et commune periclum una salus!*"

But Holbein's spectre was already behind the door, and had marked his men! In a few months the swift bullet for one enthusiast; for another (the least considered of them all), a glorious death on the walls of a hard-won rampart — he the first to raise his colors and the shout of victory; for only one, or two, or three, that doubtful boon of existence after the struggle was all over; for *all* survivors, memories that made the next four years seem to be the sum of life, — the only real life, — beside which the coming years would be but a troubled dream.

The long session did not close until June, and in the preceding month Abraham Lincoln was chosen candidate by the Republican party for the presidency. Stephen A. Douglas was the candidate of the Democrats. The South and the "Old Line Whigs" also named their men. The words "irrepressible conflict" were much used during the ensuing campaign.

The authorship of these words has always been credited to Mr. Seward. Their true origin may be found in the address of Mr. Lincoln, delivered at Cincinnati, Ohio, in September, 1859. On page 262 of the volume published by Follett, Foster, and Company in 1860, entitled "Political Debates between Hon. Abraham Lincoln and Hon. Stephen A. Douglas," may be found the following extract from Mr. Lincoln's speech: —

> "I have alluded in the beginning of these remarks to the fact that Judge Douglas has made great complaint of my having expressed the opinion that this government 'cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.' He has

complained of Seward for using different language, and declaring that there is an 'irrepressible conflict' between the principles of free and slave labor. [*A voice*, "He says it is not original with Seward. That is original with Lincoln."] I will attend to that immediately, sir. Since that time Hickman of Pennsylvania expressed the same sentiment. He has never denounced Mr. Hickman; why? There is a little chance, notwithstanding that opinion in the mouth of Hickman, that he may yet be a Douglas man. That is the difference! It is not unpatriotic to hold that opinion, if a man is a Douglas man.

"But neither I, nor Seward, nor Hickman is entitled to the enviable or unenviable distinction of having first expressed that idea. That same idea was expressed by the *Richmond Enquirer* in Virginia, in 1856, quite two years before it was expressed by the first of us. And while Douglas was pluming himself that in his conflict with my humble self, last year, he had 'squelched out' that fatal heresy, as he delighted to call it, and had suggested that if he only had had a chance to be in New York and meet Seward he would have 'squelched' it there also, it never occurred to him to breathe a word against Pryor. I don't think that you can discover that Douglas ever talked of going to Virginia to 'squelch' out that idea there. No. More than that. That same Roger A. Pryor was brought to Washington City and made the editor of the *par excellence* Douglas paper, after making use of that expression, which in us is so unpatriotic and heretical."

On November 6, 1860, Mr. Lincoln was elected President of the United States. On the following December 20 we heard that South Carolina had seceded from the Union. We were all, at the time the news arrived, attending the wedding of Mr. Bouligny and Miss Parker. The ceremony had taken place, and I was standing behind the President's chair when a commotion in the hall arrested his attention. He looked at me over his shoulder and asked if I supposed the house was on fire.

"I will inquire the cause, Mr. President," I said. I went out at the nearest door, and there in the entrance hall I found Mr. Lawrence Keitt, member from South Carolina, leaping in the air, shaking a paper over his head, and exclaiming, "Thank God! Oh, thank God!" I took hold of him and said: "Mr. Keitt, are you crazy? The President hears you, and wants to know what's the matter."

"Oh!" he cried, "South Carolina has seceded! Here's the telegram. I feel like a boy let out from school."

I returned, and bending over Mr. Buchanan's chair, said in a low voice: "It appears, Mr. President, that South Carolina has seceded from the Union. Mr. Keitt has a telegram." He looked at me, stunned for a moment. Falling back and grasping the arms of his chair, he whispered, "Madam, might I beg you to have my carriage called?" I met his secretary and sent him in without explanation, and myself saw that his carriage was at the door before I reëntered the room. I then found my husband, who was already cornered with Mr. Keitt, and we called our own carriage and drove to Judge Douglas's. There was no more thought of bride, bridegroom, wedding-cake, or wedding breakfast.

This was the tremendous event which was to change all our lives, — to give us poverty for riches, mutilation and wounds for strength and health, obscurity and degradation for honor and distinction, exile and loneliness for inherited homes and friends, pain and death for happiness and life.

Apprehension was felt lest the new President's inaugural might be the occasion of rioting, if not of violence. We Southerners were advised to send women and children out of the city. Hastily packing my personal and household belongings to be sent after me, I took my little boys, with their faithful nurse, Eliza Page, on board the steamer to Acquia Creek, and, standing on deck as long as I could see the dome of the Capitol, commenced my journey homeward. My husband remained behind, and kept his seat in Congress until Mr. Lincoln's inauguration. He described that mournful day to me, — differing so widely from the happy installation of Mr. Pierce; "o'er all there hung a shadow and a fear." Every one was oppressed by it, and no one more than the doomed President himself.

We were reunited a few weeks afterward at our father's house in Petersburg; and in a short time my young congressman had become my young colonel — and congressman as well, for as soon as Virginia seceded he was elected to the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States of America, and was commissioned colonel by Governor Letcher.

We bade adieu to the bright days, — the balls (sometimes three in one evening), the round of visits, the levees, the charming "at homes." The setting sun of such a day should pillow itself on golden clouds, bright harbingers of a morning of beauty and happiness. Alas, alas! "whom the gods destroy they first infatuate."

The fate of Virginia was decided April 15, when President Lincoln demanded troops for the subjugation of the seceding states of the South. The temper of Governor Letcher of Virginia was precisely in accord with the spirit that prompted the answer of Governor Magoffin of Kentucky to a similar call for state militia, "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern states!" Until this call of the President, Virginia had been extremely averse from secession, and even though she deemed it within her rights to leave the Union, she did not wish to pledge herself to join the Confederate States of the South. Virginia was the Virginian's country. The common people were wont to speak of her as "The Old Mother," — "the mother of us all," a mother so honored and loved that her brood of children must be noble and true.

Her sons had never forgotten her! She had fought nobly in the Revolution and had afterward surrendered, for the common good, her magnificent territory. Had she retained this vast dominion, she could now have dictated to all the other states. She gave it up from a pure spirit of patriotism, — that there might be the fraternity which could not exist without equality, — and in surrendering it she had reserved for herself the right to withdraw from the confederation whenever she should deem it expedient for her own welfare. There were leading spirits who thought the hour had come when she might demand her right. She was not on a plane with the other states of the Union. "Virginia, New York, and Massachusetts had expressly reserved the right to withdraw from the Union, and explicitly disclaimed the right or power to bind the hands of posterity by any form of government whatever."[1]

A strong party was the "Union Party," sternly resolved against secession, willing to run the risks of fighting within the Union for the rights of the state. This spirit was so strong that any hint of secession had been met with angry defiance. A Presbyterian clergyman had ventured, in his morning sermon, a hint that Virginia might need her sons for defence, when a gray-haired elder left the church, and turning at the door, shouted, "Traitor!" This was in Petersburg, near the birthplace of General Winfield Scott.

And still another party was the enthusiastic secession party, resolved upon resistance to coercion; the men who could believe nothing good of the North, should interests of that section conflict with those of the South; who cherished the bitterest resentments for all the sneers and insults in Congress; who, like the others, adored their own state and were ready and willing to die in her defence. Strange to say, this was the predominating spirit all through the country, in rural districts as well as in the small towns and the larger cities. It seemed to be born all at once in every breast as soon as Lincoln demanded the soldiers.

When it was disclosed that a majority of the

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[1] Life of Joseph E. Johnston, by Bradley T. Johnson, p. 21.

Virginia Convention opposed taking the state out of the Union, the secessionists became greatly alarmed; for they knew that without the border states, of which Virginia was the leader, the cotton states would be speedily crushed. They were positively certain, however, that in the event of actual hostilities Virginia would unite with her Southern associates. Accordingly, it was determined to bring a popular pressure to bear upon the government at Montgomery to make an assault on Fort Sumter. To that end my husband went to Charleston, and delivered to an immense and enthusiastic audience a most impassioned and vehement speech, urging the Southern troops to "strike a blow," and assuring them that in case of conflict, Virginia would secede "within an hour by Shrewsbury clock." The blow was struck; Mr. Lincoln called upon Virginia for a quota of troops to subdue the rebellion, and the state immediately passed an ordinance of secession. Here, in substance, is my husband's Charleston speech, as reported at the time by the *New York Tribune*: —

"Mr. Roger A. Pryor, called by South Carolina papers the 'eloquent young tribune of the South,' was on Wednesday evening serenaded at Charleston. In response to the compliment he made some remarks, among which were the following: 'Gentlemen, for my part, if Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin were to abdicate their office tomorrow, and were to give to me a blank sheet of paper whereupon to write the conditions of reannexation to the Union, I would scorn the privilege of putting the terms upon paper. [*Cheers.*] And why? Because our grievance has not been with reference to the insufficiency of the guarantees, but the unutterable perfidy of the guarantors; and inasmuch as they would not fulfil the stipulations of the old Constitution, much less will they carry out the guarantees of a better Constitution looking to the interests of the South. Therefore, I invoke you to give no countenance to any idea of reconstruction. [*A voice*, "We don't intend to do anything of the kind."] It is the fear of that which is embarrassing us in Virginia, for all there say if we are reduced to the dilemma of an alternative, they will espouse the cause of the South against the interests of the Northern Confederacy. If you have any ideas of reconstruction, I pray you annihilate them. Give forth to the world that under no circumstances whatever will South Carolina stay in political association with the Northern states. I understand since I have been in Charleston that there is some little apprehension of Virginia in this great exigency. Now I am not speaking for Virginia officially; I wish to God I were, for I would put her out of the Union before twelve o'clock to-night. [*Laughter.*] But I bid you dismiss your apprehensions as to the old Mother of Presidents. Give the old lady time. [*Laughter.*] She cannot move with the agility of some of the younger daughters. She is a little rheumatic. Remember she must be pardoned for deferring somewhat to the exigencies of opposition in the Pan Handle of Virginia. Remember the personnel of the convention to whom she intrusted her destinies. But making these reservations, I assure you that just so certain as to-morrow's sun will rise upon us, just so certain will Virginia be a member of the Southern Confederation. We will put her in *if you but strike a blow*. [*Cheers.*] I do not say anything to produce an effect upon the military operations of your authorities, for I know no more about them than a spinster. I only repeat, if you wish Virginia to be with you, *strike a blow!*'"

The effect, however, of the speech was not merely the adoption of the ordinance of secession by Virginia. In precipitating the assault upon Sumter the speech had another and now little known consequence.

It must be borne in mind that when only South Carolina had seceded, the Republican party, with the assent of the President-elect, had proffered to the South a compromise in these terms: "The Constitution shall never be altered so as to authorize Congress to abolish or interfere with slavery in the states."[1] Of course, no Southern state would oppose a proposition which for the first time made slavery *eo nomine* an institution under federal protection, and guaranteed it perpetual existence in the slave-holding states. Equally evident was it that a measure supported by Lincoln and the entire Republican party would prevail in every Northern state. The mere pendency, then, of such an overture, if not intercepted in its passage by an act of hostility between the seceded states and the federal government, would have certainly bound the border states to the Union, and have insured the miscarriage of the secession movement.

Had not the attack on Sumter been made at the critical moment, the Republican compromise, as already intimated, would have prevailed, and slavery have been imbedded in the Constitution and fastened upon the country beyond the chance of removal, — except by revolution, or the voluntary renunciation of its cherished interests by the slave-holding South.

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[1] Rhodes's "History of the United States," III, p. 175.

The latter alternative is an inconceivable possibility; and hence, but for the "blow" which prompted hostilities and prevented a pacific solution, slavery would exist to-day as a recognized institution of the republic.

I do not pretend that this consummation was desired or anticipated by the Virginia secessionist, but affirm only that he "builded better than he knew," and that but for his act the nation would not now be free from the reproach of human slavery.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE "overt act," for which everybody looked, had been really the reënforcement by federal troops of the fort in Charleston harbor. When Fort Sumter was reduced by Beauregard, "the fight was on." My husband, with other gentlemen, was deputed by General Beauregard to demand the surrender of the fort, and in case of refusal which he foresaw, to direct the commandant of the battery, Johnson, to open fire. When the order was delivered to the commandant, he invited my husband to fire the first shot; but this honor my husband declined, and instead suggested the venerable Edmund Ruffin, an intense secessionist, for that service. It was the prevalent impression at the time that Mr. Ruffin did "fire the first gun"; at all events he fired, to him, the last; for on hearing of Lee's surrender, Cato-like, he destroyed himself.

Fort Sumter was reduced on April 12, and Virginia was in a wild state of excitement and confusion. On May 23 Virginia ratified an ordinance of secession, and on the early morning of May 24 the federal soldiers, under the Virginian, General Winfield Scott, crossed the Potomac River and occupied Arlington Heights and the city of Alexandria. "The invasion of Virginia, the pollution of her sacred soil," as it was termed, called forth a vigorous proclamation from her governor and a cry of rage from her press. General Beauregard issued a fierce proclamation, tending to fire the hearts of the Virginians with indignation. "A reckless and unprincipled host," he declared, "has invaded your soil," etc. Virginia needed no such stimulus. The First, Second, and Third Virginia were immediately mustered into service, and my husband was colonel of the Third Virginia Infantry. He was ordered to Norfolk with his regiment to protect the seaboard. I was proud of his colonelship, and much exercised because he had no shoulder-straps. I undertook to embroider them myself. We had not then decided upon the star for our colonels' insignia, and I supposed he would wear the eagle like all the colonels I had ever known. No embroidery bullion was to be had, but I bought heavy bullion fringe, cut it in lengths, and made eagles, probably of some extinct species, for the like were unknown in Audubon's time, and have not since been discovered. However, they were accepted, admired, and, what is worse, worn.

My resolution was taken. I steadily withstood all the entreaties of my friends, and determined to follow my husband's regiment through the war. I did not ask his permission. I would give no trouble. I should be only a help to his sick men and his wounded. I busied myself in preparing a camp equipage — a field stove with a rotary chimney, ticks for bedding, to be filled with straw or hay or leaves, as the case might be, and a camp chest of tin utensils, strong blankets, etc. A tent could always be had from Major Shepard, our quartermaster. News soon came that the Third Virginia had been ordered to Smithfield. McClellan was looking toward the peninsula, and Major-general Joseph E. Johnston was keeping an eye on McClellan.

When I set forth on what my father termed my "wild-goose chase," I found the country literally alive with troops. The train on which I travelled was switched off again and again to allow them to pass. My little boys had the time of their lives, cheering the soldiers and picnicking at short intervals all day. But I had hardly reached Smithfield before the good people of the town forcibly took my camp equipage from me, stored it, and installed me in great comfort in a private house. My colonel soon left me to take his seat in the Confederate Congress along with Hon. William C. Rives and others of our old friends. I was left alone at Smithfield, not *la fille du régiment*, but *la mère!* I heard daily from all the sick men in winter quarters, and ministered to them according to my ability. The camp fascinated me. Picturesque huts were built of pine with the bark on, and in clearings here and there brilliant fires of the resinous wood were constantly burning. I knew many of the officers, and from them soon learned that the deadly foe at home was more to be dreaded than the foe in front. Smithfield was noted for its Virginia hams, its fine fish, its mullets that would leap into the fisherman's boat while he lazily enjoyed his brier-root, its great sugary "yams," as the red sweet-potato was called. It was noted as well for the excellence of its brandy.

My colonel issued stern orders that no intoxicating liquors were to be sold to his soldiers. Every man who went on leave to the town was inspected on his return. But drunken men gave trouble in the camp, and it was discovered that brandy was smuggled in the barrels of the muskets, and in yams, hollowed out and innocently reposing at the bottom of baskets.

Thereupon one morning Smithfield was in an uproar, negroes screaming and running about with pails to be filled, tipsy pigs staggering along the streets. A squad of soldiers had been ordered out from camp, had entered every store, and emptied the contents of every cask into the gutters. A drunken brawl had occurred in camp, and one soldier had killed another!

The soldier was arrested and imprisoned. Later the prisoner was tried and acquitted, — his own colonel argued in his defence, — and completely sobered, he made a good soldier. The prompt act of the commanding officer was salutary. There was no more trouble — no more muskets loaded with inflammable stuff, no more yams flavored with brandy.

When the colonel was attending the session of Congress, Theo, not yet ten years old, was often mounted on a barrel, in his little linen blouse, to drill the Third Virginia! He had studied military tactics, Hardee and Jomini, with his father. Lying before me as I write is his own copy of Jomini's "L'Art de la Guerre," in which he proudly wrote his name. An event of personal interest was the presentation to the colonel of a blue silken flag, made by the ladies of Petersburg. The party came down the river in a steamboat, and I have before my reminiscent eyes an interesting picture of my colonel, as he stood with his long hair waving in a stiff breeze, listening to the brave things the dear women's spokesman said of their devotion to him and to their country. This flag is somewhere, to-day, in that country, but not in the home of the man who had earned and owned it. It is of heavy blue silk; on one side the arms of the state of Virginia, on the other Justice with the scales. In the upper left-hand corner is the word "Williamsburg," room being left for the many other battles in store for the young colonel.

Things were going on beautifully with us when I one day received a peremptory official order to change my base — to leave Smithfield next morning before daybreak! The orderly who brought it to me looked intensely surprised when I calmly said: "Tell the colonel it is impossible! I can't get ready by to-morrow to leave."

"Madam," said the man, gravely, "it is none of my business, but when Colonel Pryor gives an order, it is wise to be a strict constructionist."

My colonel had returned suddenly; when I, in an open wagon, was on my way next morning at sunrise to the nearest depot, he and his men were *en route* to the peninsula. They gave McClellan battle May 5 at Williamsburg, — "Pryor and Anderson in front," — captured four hundred unwounded prisoners, ten colors, and twelve field-pieces, slept on the field of battle, and marched off next morning at their convenience. My colonel personally ministered to the wounded prisoners, and General McClellan recognizes this service in his "own story." After this he was promoted, and my bristling eagles retired before the risen stars of the brigadier-general.

The news of his probable promotion reached me at the Exchange Hotel in Richmond, whither I had gone that I might be near headquarters and thus learn the earliest tidings from the peninsula. There he joined me for one day. We read with keen interest the announcement in the papers that his name had been sent in by the President for promotion. Mrs. Davis held a reception at the Spotswood Hotel on the evening following this announcement, and we availed ourselves of the opportunity to make our respects to her.

A crowd gathered before the Exchange to congratulate my husband, and learning that he had gone to the Spotswood, repaired thither, and with shouts and cheers called him out for a speech. This was very embarrassing, and he fled to a corner of the drawing-room and hid behind a screen of plants. I was standing near the President, trying to hold his attention by remarks on the weather and kindred subjects of a thrilling nature, when a voice from the street called out: "Pryor! *General* Pryor!" I could endure the suspense no longer, and asked tremblingly, "Is this true, Mr. President?" Mr. Davis looked at me with a benevolent smile and said, "I have no reason, madam, to doubt it, except that I saw it this morning in the papers;" and Mrs.

Davis at once summoned the bashful colonel: "What are you doing lying there *perdu* behind the geraniums? Come out and take your honors."

Following fast upon the battle after which General Johnston ordered "Williamsburg" to be painted on his banner, my general fought the battle of "Fair Oaks" or "Seven Pines" — and in June the Seven Days' battle around Richmond. The story of these desperate battles has been told many times by the generals who fought them. "Pryor's Brigade" was in the front often; in the thick of the fight always. I myself saw my husband draw his sword, and give the word of command "Head of column to the right" as he entered the first of these battles.

I spent the time nursing the wounded in Kent and Paine's Hospital in Richmond, and have told elsewhere the pathetic story of my experience as hospital nurse. For the needs of that stern hour my dear general gave himself — and his wife gave herself. Every linen garment I possessed, except one change, every garment of cotton fabric, all my table-linen, all my bed-linen, even the chintz covers for furniture, — all were torn into strips and rolled for bandages for the soldiers' wounds.

When the fight was over, a gray, haggard, dust-covered soldier entered my room, and throwing himself upon the couch, gave way to the anguish of his heart — "My men! My men! They are almost all dead!"

Thousands of Confederate soldiers were killed or wounded. Richmond was saved! "I am in hopes," wrote General McClellan to his Secretary of

War, "the enemy is as completely worn out as I am."

He was! General Lee realized that his men must have rest. My husband was allowed a few days' respite from duty. Almost without a pause he had fought the battles of Williamsburg, Seven Pines, Mechanicsville, Gaines's Mill, Frazier's Farm, and Malvern Hill. He had won his promotion early, but he had lost the soldiers he had led, the loved commander who appreciated him, had seen old schoolmates and friends fall by his side, — the dear fellow, George Loyal Gordon, who had been his best man at our wedding, — old college comrades, valued old neighbors.

Opposed to him in battle, then and after, were men who in after years avowed themselves his warm friends, — General Hancock, General Slocum, General Butterfield, General Sickles, General Fitz-John Porter, General McClellan, and General Grant. They had fought loyally under opposing banners, and from time to time, as the war went on, one and another had been defeated; but over all, and through all, their allegiance had been given to a banner that has never surrendered, — the standard of the universal brotherhood of all true men.

I cannot omit a passing tribute to the heroic fortitude and devotion of the Richmond women in the time of their greatest trial. These were the delicate, beautiful women I had so admired when I lived among them. Not once did they spare themselves, or complain, or evince weakness, or give way to despair. The city had "no language but a cry."

Two processions unceasingly passed along the streets; one the wounded borne from the battlefield; the other the cheering men going to take their places at the front. Within the hospitals all that devotion could suggest, of unselfish service, gentle ministration, encouragement, was done by the dear women. Every house was open for the sick and wounded. Oh, but I cannot again tell it all! Sacredly, tenderly I remember, but to-day it seems so cruel, so unnecessary, so wicked! I cannot dwell upon it!

One beautiful memory is of the unfailing kindness and loyalty of the negroes. In the hospitals, in the camps, in our own houses, they faithfully sympathized with us and helped us. Not only at this time, but all during the war, they behaved admirably. The most intense secessionist I ever knew was my general's man, John. Early in the day the black man elected for himself an attitude of quiescence as to politics, and addressed himself to the present need for self-preservation.

It was "Domingo," one of the cooks of our brigade at Williamsburg, that originated the humorous description of a negro's self-appraisement and sensations in battle, so unblushingly quoted afterward by a certain "Cæsar" in northern Virginia. A shell had entered the domain of pots and kettles, and created what Domingo termed a "clatteration." He at once started for the rear.

"What's de matter, Mingo?" asked a fellow-servant, "whar you gwine wid such a hurrification?"

"I gwine to git out o' trouble—*dar* whar I gwine! Dar's too much powder in dem big things. Dis chile ain't gwine bu'n hisself! An' dar's dem Minnie bullets, too, comin' frew de a'r, singin': '*Whar* is you? *Whar* is you?' I ain't gwine stop an' tell 'em whar I is! I'se a twenty-two-hundurd-dollar nigger, an' I'se gwine tek keer o' what b'longs to marster, I is!"

A story was related by a Northern writer of an interview with a negro who had run the blockade and entered the service of a Federal officer. He was met on board a steamer, after the battle of Fort Donelson, on his way to the rear, and questioned in regard to his experience of war.

"Were you in the fight?"

"Had a little taste of it, sah."

"Stood your ground, of course."

"No, sah! I run."

"Not at the first fire?"

"Yes, sah! an' would a' run sooner ef I knowed it was a-comin'!"

"Why, that wasn't very creditable to your courage, was it?"

"Dat ain't in my line, sah,—cookin's my perfeshun."

"But have you no regard for your reputation?"

"Refutation's nothin' by de side o' life."

"But you don't consider your life worth more than other people's, do you?"

"Hit's wuth mo' to me, sah!"

"Then you must value it very highly."

"Yas, sah, I does,—mo'n all dis wuld! Mo' dan a million o' dollars, sah. What would dat be wuth to a man wid de bref out o' 'im? Self-perserbashun is de fust law wid me, sah!"

"But why should you act upon a different rule from other men?"

"'Cause diffunt man set diffunt value 'pon his life. Mine ain't in de market."

"Well, if all soldiers were like you, traitors might have broken up the government without resistance."

"Dat's so! Dar wouldn't 'a' been no hep fer it. But I don't put my life in de scale against no gubberment on dis yearth. No gubberment gwine pay me ef I loss mehsef."

"Well, do you think you would have been much missed if you had been killed?"

"Maybe not, sah! A daid white man ain' much use to dese yere sogers, let alone a daid niggah; but I'd a missed mehsef pow'ful, an' dat's de pint wid me."

CHAPTER XIX

ON the 13th of August, 1862, McClellan abandoned his camp at Harrison's Landing and retired to Fortress Monroe. General Lee withdrew all his troops from Richmond but two companies of infantry left behind to protect the city in case of cavalry raids. General Jackson joined General Lee, and the battle known as the second Manassas was fought. Wilcox, Pryor, and Featherstone were again to the front, and at one time when the desperate struggle of this hard-fought battle was at its height, and the situation augured adversely to the Southern troops, it was General Pryor's privilege to suggest that several batteries should be rushed to an advantageous position and a raking fire be opened upon the enemy's flank which nothing could withstand. Within fifteen minutes the aspect of the field was changed. On the plateau occupied by the Federals stood the Henry house, celebrated in all history as the spot where Jackson's Brigade, "standing like a stone wall," had, a year before, earned the name for their commander which has become immortal.

I think it was early in September, 1862, that General Lee announced to President Davis that he proposed entering Maryland with his army. Before he could receive an answer the Southerners were crossing the Potomac singing "Maryland, my Maryland," and in a few days Jackson reached Frederick. "My Maryland" was earnestly invited and positively declined to rid her "shores" of "the despot's heel." The despot's hand could pay in good greenbacks for her wheat and flour and cattle, while these new fellows had only Confederate money. The governor and leading professional men were all loyal to the Union. The farmers drove their herds into Pennsylvania, and in the mills the sound of the grinding was not low — it ceased altogether. The Confederates might defeat Pope and McClellan in the battle-field; the farmer proved himself master of the situation in the wheat-field.

My general was in Frederick with his brigade, and incidentally saw and heard nothing of the touching occurrence commemorated by Whittier. The Quaker poet was a romancer! I use no harsher term. I am perfectly willing Barbara Frietchie's "old gray head" should forever wear the crown he placed upon it, but I cannot brook "the blush of shame" over Stonewall Jackson's face. Blush he often did, — for he was as delicate as a woman, — but blush for shame, never! Rhodes says: "His riding through the streets gave an occasion to forge the story of Barbara Frietchie. It is a token of the intense emotion which clouds our judgment of the enemy in arms. Although Stonewall Jackson, not long before, was eager to raise the black flag, he was incapable of giving the order to fire at the window of a private house for the sole reason that there 'the old flag met his sight,' and it is equally impossible that a remark of old Dame Barbara, 'Spare your country's flag,' could have brought 'a blush of shame' to his cheek. Jackson was not of the cavalier order, but he had a religious and chivalrous respect for women." He goes on to state that a woman, not Barbara Frietchie, waved a flag as Jackson passed to which he paid no attention. Also, that when he had passed through Middletown, two pretty girls had waved Union flags in his face. "He bowed and raised his hat, and turning with his quiet smile to his staff, said: 'We evidently have no friends in this town.'"

On September 15 the battle-line, with my husband's division (Longstreet's), was drawn up in front of Sharpsburg (or Antietam), and again Pryor, Wilcox, and Featherstone were well to the front. My husband commanded Anderson's division at Antietam, General Anderson having been wounded. This battle is quoted, along with the battle of Seven Pines, as one of the most hotly contested of the war. Sorely pressed at one time, General Pryor despatched an orderly to General Longstreet with a request for artillery. The latter tore the margin from a newspaper and wrote: "I am sending you the guns, dear General. This is a hard fight, and we had better all die than lose it." At one time during the battle the combatants agreed upon a brief cessation, that the dead and wounded of both sides might be removed. While General Pryor waited, a Federal officer approached him.

"General," said he, "I have just detected one of my men in robbing the body of one of your soldiers. I have taken his booty from him, and now consign it to you."

Without examining the small bundle — tied in a handkerchief — my husband ordered it to be properly enclosed and sent to me. The handkerchief contained a gold watch, a pair of gold sleeve-links, a few pieces of silver, and a strip of paper on which was written, "Strike till the last armed foe expires," and signed "A Florida Patriot." There seemed to be no clew by which I might hope to find an inheritor for these treasures. I could only take care of them.

I brought them forth one day to interest an aged relative, whose chair was placed in a sunny window. "I think, my dear," she said, "there are pin-scratched letters on the inside of these sleeve-buttons." Sure enough, there were three initials, rudely made, but perfectly plain.

Long afterward I met a Confederate officer from Florida who had fought at Antietam.

"Did you know any one from your state, Captain, who was killed at Sharpsburg?"

"Alas! yes," he replied, and mentioned a name corresponding exactly with the scratched initials.

The parcel, with a letter from me, was sent to an address he gave me, and in due time I received a most touching letter of thanks from the mother of the dead soldier.

In August I had left my Gordon, Theo, and Mary with my dear aunt, who had been compelled to abandon her mountain home and now lived near "The Oaks" in Charlotte County. There was no safety any longer except in the interior, far from the railroads. Even there raiding companies of cavalry dashed through the country bringing terror and leaving a desert as far as food was concerned.

For myself, as I could not go northward with my soldiers, I could at least keep within the lines of communication, and I selected a little summer resort, "Coyners," in the Blue Ridge Mountains on the line of the railroad. There I found General Elzey, — who had fought gallantly at Bull Run and elsewhere, — with his face terribly wounded and bandaged up to his eyes. He had been sent to the rear with a physician for rest and recovery. His brilliant wife was with him; also his aid, Captain Contee, and his young bride, who had crossed the Potomac in an open boat to join him and redeem her pledge to marry him. We were joined by Mrs. A. P. Hill, General and Mrs. Wigfall and a lovely daughter who has recently given to the world an interesting story of her war recollections. The small hotel spanned a little green valley at its head, and stretching behind was a velvet strip of green, a spring and rivulet in the midst, and a mountain ridge on either side. I had a tiny cottage with windows that opened against the side of the hill (or mountain), and lying on my bed at night, the moon and stars, as they rose above me, seemed so near I could have stretched a long arm and picked them off the hilltop!

Strenuous as were the times, awful the suspense, the vexed questions of precedence, relative importance, rankled in the bosoms of the distinguished ladies in the hotel. One after another would come out to me: "I'd like to know *who* this Maryland woman is that she gives herself such airs;" or, "How much longer do you think I'll stand Dolly Morgan? Why, she treats me as though she were the Queen of Sheba." I could only reply with becoming meekness: "I'm sure I don't know! I am only a brigadier, you know — the rest of you are major-generals — I am not competent to judge."

Nature had done everything for our happiness. The climate was delicious; the valley was carpeted with moss and tender grass, and thickly gemmed with daisies and purple asters. Before sunrise the skies, like all morning skies seen between high hills, looked as if made of roses. A short climb would bring us to a spot where the evening sky and mountain would be bathed in golden glory. But oh, the anguish of anxiety, the terror, the dreams at night of battle and murder and sudden death!

My little Roger was desperately ill at this place, and for many days I despaired of his life. General Elzey's physician gave me no hope. He counselled only fortitude and resignation. The dear friend of my girlhood, George Wythe Randolph, was Secretary of War. I wrote him a letter imploring, "Send my husband to me, if but for one hour." He answered, "God knows I long to help and comfort you! but you ask the *impossible*." I soon knew why. My general was at the front!

Not until late — long after every guest had departed — was I able to travel with my invalid son. Upon arriving in Charlottesville, he had a relapse of typhoid fever and was ill unto death for many weeks. Meanwhile his father was ordered to the vicinity of Suffolk to collect forage and provisions from counties near the Federal lines.

The enemy destined to conquer us at last — the "ravenous, hunger-starved wolf" — already menaced us. General Longstreet had learned that corn and bacon were stored in the northeastern counties of North Carolina, and he sent two companies of cavalry on a foraging expedition to the region around Suffolk.

"The Confederate lines," says a historian, "extended only to the Blackwater River on the east, where a body of Confederate troops was stationed to keep the enemy in check." That body was commanded by General Pryor, now in front of a large Federal force to keep it in check while the wagon trains sent off corn and bacon for Lee's army. This was accomplished by sleepless vigilance on the part of the Confederate general. The Federal forces made frequent sallies from Suffolk, but were always driven back with loss. It is amusing to read of the calmness with which his commanding officers ordered him to accomplish great things with his small force.

"I cannot," says General Colston, "forward your requisition for two regiments of infantry and one of cavalry: it is almost useless to make such requisitions, for they remain unanswered. You must use every possible means to deceive the enemy as to your strength, and you must *hold the line of the Blackwater to the last extremity*."

General French writes: "If I had any way to increase your forces, I should do so, but I have to bow to higher authority and the necessities of the service. But you must annoy the villains all you can, and make them uncomfortable. Give them no rest. Ambush them at every turn."

General Pryor did not dream I would come to his camp at Blackwater. He supposed I would find quarters among my friends, but I had now no home. Our venerable father had sent his family to the interior after the battles around Richmond, had given up his church in Petersburg, and, commending the women, old men, and children to the care of a successor, had entered the army as chaplain, "where," as he said, "I can follow my own church members and comfort them in sickness, if I can do no more."

As soon as the position of our brigade was made known to me, I drew forth the box containing the camp outfit, packed a trunk or two, and took the cars for the Blackwater. The terminus of the railroad was only a few miles from our camp. The Confederate train could go no farther because of the enemy. The day's journey was long, for the passenger car attached to the transportation train was dependent upon the movements of the latter. The few passengers who had set forth with me in the morning had left at various wayside stations, and I was now alone. I had no idea where we should sleep that night. I thought I would manage it somehow — somewhere.

We arrived at twilight at the end of our journey. When I left the car, my little boys gathered around me. There was a small wooden building near, which served for waiting-room and post-office. The only dwelling in sight was another small house, surrounded by a few bare trees. My first impression was that I had never before seen such an expanse of gray sky. The face of the earth was a dead, bare level, as far as the eye could reach; and much, very much, of it lay under water. I was in the region of swamps, stretching on and on until they culminated in the one great "Dismal Swamp" of the country. No sounds were to be heard, no hum of industry or lowing of cattle, but a mighty concert rose from thousands, nay millions, of frogs.

"Now," thought I, "here is really a fine opportunity to be 'jolly'! Mark Tapley's swamps couldn't surpass these." But all the railroad folk were departing, and the postmaster was preparing to lock his door and leave also. I liked the looks of the little man, and ventured: —

"Can you tell me, sir, where I can get lodging to-night? I am Mrs. Pryor — the general's wife, and to-morrow he will take care of me."

My little man did not belie his looks. He took me in his own house, and next day my general, at his invitation, made the house his headquarters.

My stay on the Blackwater was most interesting, but I cannot repeat the story here. Suffice it to say that our safety so near the enemy's lines — he was just across the Blackwater — was purchased by eternal vigilance.

Towards the last of January we had a season of warm, humid weather. Apparently the winter was over; the grass was springing on the swamp, green and luxurious, and the willows swelling into bud. There were no singing birds on the Blackwater as early as January 28, but the frogs were mightily exercised upon the coming of spring, and their nightly concerts took on a jubilant note.

One day I had a few moments' conversation with my husband about army affairs, and he remarked that our Southern soldiers were always restless unless they were in action. "They never can stand still in battle," he said; "they are willing to yell and charge the most desperate positions, but if they can't move forward, they must move backward. Stand still they cannot."

I thought I could perceive symptoms of restlessness on the part of their commander. Often in the middle of the night he would summon John, mount him, and send him to camp, a short distance away; and presently I would hear the tramp, tramp of the general's staff-officers, coming to hold a council of war in his bedroom. On the 28th of January he confided to me that on the next day he would make a sally in the direction of the enemy. "He is getting entirely too impudent," said he; "I'm not strong enough to drive him out of the country, but he must keep his place."

I had just received a present of coffee. This was at once roasted and ground. On the day of the march fires were kindled before dawn under the great pots used at the "hog-killing time" (an era in the household), and many gallons of coffee were prepared. This was sweetened, and when our men paused near the house to form the line of march, the servants and little boys passed down the line with buckets of the steaming coffee, cups, dippers, and gourds. Every soldier had a good draught of comfort and cheer. The weather had suddenly changed. The great snow-storm that fell in a few days was gathering, the skies were lowering, and the horizon was dark and threatening.

After the men had marched away, I drove to the hospital tent and put myself at the disposal of the surgeon. We inspected the store of bandages and lint, and I was intrusted with the preparation of more.

Meanwhile John, who was left behind, indemnified himself for the loss of the excitement of the hour by abusing "the nasty abolition Yankees," singing: —

"Jeff Davis is a gent'man,
An' Linkum is a fool!
Jeff Davis rides a fine white horse,
An' Linkum rides a mule," etc.

He was not the only one of the nation's wards who held the nation in contempt — root and branch, President and people. The special terms in which he loved to designate them were in common use among his own race. Some of the expressions of the great men I had known in Washington were quite as offensive and not a bit less inelegant, although framed in better English. I never approved of "calling names," for higher reasons than the demands of good taste. I had seen what comes of it, and I reproved John for teaching them to my little boys.

"No'm," said John, crestfallen, "I won't say nothin'; I'll just say the Yankees are mighty mean folks."

My dear general found the enemy at the "Deserted House"; and there gave them battle. He may tell his own story: —

"Carrsville, Isle of Wight, January 30, 1863.

"To Brigadier-general Colston,
"Petersburg, Va.

"*General:* This morning at four o'clock the enemy under Major-general Peck attacked me at Kelley's store, eight miles from Suffolk. After three hours' severe fighting we repulsed them at all points and held the field. Their force is represented by prisoners to be between ten and fifteen thousand. My loss in killed and wounded will not exceed fifty — no prisoners. I regret that Colonel Poage is among the killed. We inflicted a heavy loss on the enemy.

"Repectfully,
"Roger A. Pryor,
"Brigadier-general Commanding."

On February 2 the general thus addressed his troops: —

"The brigadier-general congratulates the troops of this command on the results of the recent combat.

"The enemy endeavored under cover of night to steal an inglorious victory by surprise, but he found us prepared at every point, and despite his superior numbers, greater than your own in the proportion of five to one, he was signally repulsed and compelled to leave us in possession of the field.

"After silencing his guns and dispersing his infantry, you remained on the field from night until one o'clock, awaiting the renewal of the attack, but he did not again venture to encounter your terrible fire.

"When the disparity of force between the parties is considered, with the proximity of the enemy to his stronghold, and his facilities of reënforcements by railway, the result of the action of the 30th will be accepted as a splendid illustration of your courage and good conduct."

One of the "enemy's" papers declared that our force was "three regiments of infantry, fourteen pieces of artillery, and about nine hundred cavalry!"

The temptation to "lie under a mistake" was great in those days of possible disaffection, when soldiers had to believe in their cause in order to defend it. One of the newspaper correspondents of the enemy explained why we were not again attacked after the first fight. He said: "Some may inquire why we did not march forthwith to Carrsville and attack the rebels again. The reasons are obvious. Had he went [*sic*] to Carrsville, Pryor would have had the advantage to cut off our retreat. The natives know every by-path and blind road through the woods and are ever ready to help the rebels to our detriment. Pryor can always cross the Blackwater on his floating bridge. It is prudent to allow an enemy to get well away from his stronghold the better to capture his guns and destroy his ammunition," etc.

Another paper declares he was heavily reënforced at Carrsville.

Another records: "The rebels have been very bold in this neighborhood. Pryor has been in the habit of crossing the Blackwater River whenever he wanted to. Our attacking him this time must have been a real surprise to him. We took a large number of prisoners!"

He continued the indulgence of this habit until spring, receiving from his countrymen unstinted praise for his protection of that part of our state, and for the generous supplies he sent all winter to Lee's army.

CHAPTER XX

AS for myself, when my general was no longer needed on the Blackwater, the camp chest and I and the little boys took the road again. We wandered from place to place, and at last were taken as boarders, invited by a farmer, evidently without the consent of his wife. There I was, of all women made most miserable. The mistress of the house had not wanted "refugees." Everything combined to my discomfort and wretchedness, and my dear general, making me a flying visit from Richmond where he was detained on duty, counselled me to go still farther into the interior to an old watering place, the "Amelia Springs" kept by a dear Virginia woman, Mrs. Winn. I had no sooner arrived and been welcomed by a number of refugee women, and a host of children when my three little boys developed whooping-cough, and were strictly quarantined in a cottage at the extreme edge of the grounds. The little hotel and cottages were filled with agreeable women, but everything was so sad, there was no heart in any one for gayety of any kind. One evening the proprietor proposed that the ballroom be lighted and a solitary fiddler, "Bozeman," — who was also the barber, — be installed in the musician's seat and show us what he could do. Young feet cannot resist a good waltz or polka, and the floor was soon filled with care-forgetting maidens — there were no men except the proprietor and the fiddler. Presently a telegram was received by the former. We huddled together under the chandelier to read it. Vicksburg had fallen! The gallant General Pemberton had been starved into submission. Surely and swiftly the coil was tightening around us. Surely and swiftly would we, too, be starved into submission.

My general was in Richmond serving on a court-martial, when the news from Gettysburg reached the city. Every house was in mourning, every heart broken. He called upon President and Mrs. Davis, and was told that the President could receive no one, but that Mrs. Davis would be glad to see him. The weather was intensely hot, and he felt he must not inflict a long visit; but when he rose to leave, Mrs. Davis, who seemed unwilling to be left alone, begged him to remain. After a few minutes the President appeared, weary, silent, and depressed. Presently a dear little boy entered in his night-robe, and kneeling beside his father's knee, repeated his evening prayer of thankfulness and of supplication for God's blessing on the country. The President laid his hand on the boy's head and fervently responded, "Amen." The scene recurred vividly, in the light of future events, to my husband's memory. With the coming day came the news of the surrender of Vicksburg, — news of which Mr. Davis had been forewarned the evening before, — and already the Angel of Death was hovering near to enfold the beautiful boy and bear him away from a world of trouble.

The long, sultry nights were spent by me in nursing my little boys through their distressing whooping-cough paroxysms. I was sleeping after a wakeful night, when I heard, as in a dream, my dear general's voice. I opened my heavy eyes to see him seated beside me. He earnestly entreated me to bear with patience the news he brought me — first that he must return in an hour to catch a train back to Richmond, and then that he had resigned his commission as brigadier-general and was *en route* to join General Fitz Lee's cavalry as a private. I have told the story of the events which culminated in this unprecedented act of a brigadier-general, and I fear I have not time or space to repeat it here. Briefly, Congress having recommended that regiments should be enlisted under officers from their own states, — in order to remedy, if possible, the disinclination to reënlist for the war, — there was a general upheaval and change throughout the entire army during the autumn of 1862. The Second, Fifth, and Eighth Florida regiments of General Pryor's Brigade were assigned to a Florida brigadier, the Fourteenth Alabama and the Fifth North Carolina to officers from their respective states. He was, in consequence of this order of Congress, left without a brigade. He was positively assured of a permanent command. "I regretted," wrote General Lee, November 25, 1862, "at the time, the breaking up of your brigade, but you are aware that the circumstances which produced it were beyond my control. I hope it will not be long before you will be again in the field, that the country may derive the benefit of your zeal and activity." He had a right to expect reward for his splendid service on the Blackwater. He had never ceased all winter to remind the Secretary of War of his promise to give him a permanent command. He felt that he had earned it. He had fought many battles, — Williamsburg, Seven Pines, Mechanicsville, Gaines's Mill, Frazier's Farm, the second Manassas, and Sharpsburg, besides the fight at the Deserted House on the Blackwater.

He now wrote, April 6, 1863, an almost passionate appeal to the President himself, imploring that he be sent into active service, and not be "denied participation in the struggles that are soon to determine the destinies of my country. If I know myself," he added, "it is not the vanity of command that moves me to this appeal. A single and sincere wish to contribute somewhat to the success of our cause impels me to entreat that I may be assigned to duty. That my position is not the consequence of any default of mine you will be satisfied by the enclosed letter from General Lee." The letter was followed by new promises. It was supplemented by General Pryor's fellow-officers, who not only urged that the country should not lose his services, but designated certain regiments which might easily be assigned to him. The President wrote courteous letters in reply, always repeating assurances of esteem, etc., and continuing to give brigades to newer officers. The *Richmond Examiner* and other papers now began to notice the matter and present General Pryor as arrayed with the party against the administration.

This being untrue, he was magnanimous enough to contradict. On March 17, 1863, the President wrote to him the following: —

> " GENERAL ROGER A. PRYOR:
>
> " *General:* Your gratifying letter on the 16th inst., referring to an article in the *Examiner* newspaper which seems to associate you with the opposition to the administration, has been received.
>
> " I did not see the article in question, but I am glad it had led to an expression so agreeable. The good opinion of one so competent to judge of public affairs, and who has known me so long and closely, is a great support in the midst of many and arduous trials.
>
> " Very respectfully and truly yours,
> " JEFFERSON DAVIS."

Among the letters sent to Mr. Davis in General Pryor's behalf was one from General Lee and one from General Jackson, both of which unhappily remained in the President's possession, no copies having been kept by General Pryor.

As time went on, my husband waited with such patience as he could command. Finally he resigned his commission as brigadier-general and also his seat in Congress, and entered General Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry as a private soldier. His resignation was held a long time by the President, " in the hope it would be reconsidered," and repeatedly General Pryor was " assured of the President's esteem," etc. General Jackson, General Longstreet, General A. P. Hill, General D. H. Hill, General Wilcox, General George Pickett, General Beauregard, were all his devoted friends. Some of them had, like General Johnston and General McClellan, similar experience.

It was a bitter hour for me when my general followed me to the Amelia Springs with news that he had entered the cavalry as a private. "Stay with me and the children," I implored.

"No," he said, "I had something to do with bringing on this war. I must give myself to Virginia. She needs the help of all her sons. If there are too many brigadier-generals in the service, — it may be so, — certain it is there are not enough private soldiers."

But his hour had passed. He kissed his sleeping boys and hurried off to the stage that was to take him to the depot. There John was waiting with his horses (he never accepted anything but a soldier's ration from the government), and they were off to join Fitzhugh Lee.

The Divinity that "rules our ends, rough hew them as we may," was guiding him. I look back with gratitude to these circumstances, — then so hard to bear, — circumstances to which, I am persuaded, I owe my husband's life. Even were it otherwise, God forbid I should admit into my bosom hard thoughts of any man.

General Lee welcomed him in hearty fashion: —

"HEADQUARTERS, August 26, 1863.

"*Honorable*, *General*, *or Mr.*: How shall I address you? Damn it, there's no difference! Come up to see me. Whilst I regret the causes that induced you to resign your position, I am glad that the country has not lost your active services, and that your choice to serve her has been cast in one of my regiments.

" Very respectfully,
" FITZ LEE."

As a common soldier in the cavalry service, General Pryor was assigned the duties of his position, from not one of which did he ever excuse himself.

Having no longer a home of my own, it was decided that I should go to my people in Charlotte County. One of my sons, Theo, and two of my little daughters were already there, and there I expected to remain until the end of the war.

But repeated attempts to reach my country home resulted in failure. Marauding parties and guerillas were flying all over the country. There had been alarm at a bridge over the Staunton near "The Oaks," and the old men and boys had driven away the enemy. I positively *could* not venture alone.

So it was decided that I should return to my husband's old district, to Petersburg, and there find board in some private family.

I reached Petersburg in the autumn and wandered about for days seeking refuge in some household. Many of my old friends had left town. Strangers and refugees had rented the houses of some of these, while others were filled with the homeless among their own kindred. There was no room anywhere for me, and my small purse was growing so slender that I became anxious. Finally my brother-in-law offered me an overseer's house on one of his " quarters."

The small dwelling he placed at my disposal was to be considered temporary only; some one of his town houses might soon be vacant. When I drove out to the little house, I found it hardly better than a hovel. We entered a rude, unplastered kitchen, the planks of the floor loose and wide apart, the earth beneath plainly visible. There were no windows in this smoke-blackened kitchen. A door opened into a tiny room with a fireplace, window, and out-door of its own; and a short flight of stairs led to an unplastered attic, so that the little apartment was entered by two doors and a staircase. It was already cold, but we had to beat a hasty retreat and sit outside while a negro boy made a "smudge" in the house, to dislodge the wasps that had tenanted it for many months. My brother had lent me bedding for the overseer's pine bedstead and the low trundle-bed underneath. The latter, when drawn out at night, left no room for us to stand. When that was done, we had all to go to bed. For furniture we had only two or three wooden chairs and a small table. There were no curtains, neither carpet nor rugs, and no china. There was wood at the woodpile, and a little store of meal and rice, with a small bit of bacon in the overseer's grimy closet. This was to be my winter home.

Petersburg was already virtually in a state of siege. Not a tithe of the food needed for its army of refugees could be brought to the city. Our highway, the river, was filled, except for a short distance, with Federal gunboats. The markets had long been closed. The stores of provisions had been exhausted, so that a grocery could offer little except a barrel or two of molasses made from the domestic sorghum sugar-cane, an acrid and unwholesome sweet used instead of sugar for drink with water or milk and for eating with bread. The little boys at once began to keep house. They valiantly attacked the woodpile, and found favor in the eyes of Mary and the man, whom I never knew as other than "Mary's husband." He and Mary were left in charge of the quarter and had a cabin near us.

I had no books, no newspapers, no means of communicating with the outside world; but I had one neighbor, Mrs. Laighton, a daughter of Winston Henry, granddaughter of Patrick Henry. She lived near me with her husband — a Northern man. Both were very cultivated, very poor, very kind. Mrs. Laighton, as Lucy Henry, — a brilliant young girl, — I had last seen at one of her mother's gay house-parties in Charlotte County. We had much in common, and her kind heart went out in love and pity for me. Her talk was a tonic to me. It stimulated me to play my part with courage, seeing I had been deemed worthy, by the God who made me, to suffer in this sublime struggle for liberty. She was as truly gifted as was ever her illustrious grandfather. To hear her was to believe, so persuasive and convincing was her eloquence.

I had not my good Eliza Page this winter. She had fallen ill. I had a stout little black girl, Julia, as my only servant; but Mary had a friend, a "corn-field hand," "Anarchy," who managed to help me at odd hours. Mrs. Laighton sent me every morning a print of butter as large as a silver dollar, with two or three perfect biscuits, and sometimes a bowl of persimmons or stewed dried peaches. She had a cow, and churned every day, making her biscuits of the buttermilk, which was much too precious to drink.

A great snow-storm overtook us a day or two before Christmas. My little boys kindled a roaring fire in the cold, open kitchen, roasted chestnuts, and set traps for the rabbits and "snowbirds," which never entered them. They made no murmur at the bare Christmas; they were loyal little fellows to their mother. My day had been spent in mending their garments, — making them was a privilege denied me, for I had no materials. I was not "all unhappy!" The rosy cheeks at my fireside consoled me for my privations, and something within me proudly rebelled against weakness or complaining.

The flakes were falling thickly at midnight on Christmas Eve when I suddenly became very ill. I sent out for Mary's husband and bade him gallop in to Petersburg, three miles distant, and fetch me Dr. Withers. I was dreadfully ill when he arrived, and as he stood at the foot of my bed, I said to him: "It doesn't matter much for me, Doctor! But my husband will be grateful if you keep me alive."

When I awoke from a long sleep, he was still standing at the foot of my bed where I had left him — it seemed to me ages ago! I put out my hand

and it touched a little warm bundle beside me. God had given me a dear child!

The doctor spoke to me gravely and most kindly. "I must leave you now," he said, "and, alas! I cannot come again. There are so many, so many sick. Call all your courage to your aid. Remember the pioneer women, and all they were able to survive. This woman," indicating Anarchy, "is a field-hand, but she is a mother, and she has agreed to help you during the Christmas holidays — her own time. And now, God bless you, and good-by!"

I soon slept again, and when I awoke, the very Angel of Strength and Peace had descended and abode with me. I resolved to prove to myself that if I was called to be a great woman, I *could* be a great woman. Looking at me from my bedside were my two little boys. They had been taken the night before across the snow-laden fields to my brother's house, but had risen at daybreak and had "come home to take care" of me!

My little maid Julia left me Christmas morning. She said it was too lonesome, and her "mistis" always let her choose her own places. I engaged "Anarchy" at twenty-five dollars a week for all her nights. But her hands, knotted by work in the fields, were too rough to touch my babe. I was propped up on pillows and dressed her myself, sometimes fainting when the exertion was over.

I was still in my bed three weeks afterward, when one of my boys ran in, exclaiming in a frightened voice, "Oh, mamma, an old gray soldier is coming in!"

He stood — this old gray soldier — and looked at me, leaning on his sabre.

"Is this the reward my country gives me?" he said; and not until he spoke did I recognize my husband. Turning on his heel, he went out, and I heard him call: —

"John! John! Take those horses into town and sell them! Do not return until you do so — sell them for anything! Get a cart and bring butter, eggs, and everything you can find for Mrs. Pryor's comfort."

He had been with Fitz Lee on that dreadful tramp through the snow after Averill. He had suffered cold and hunger, had slept on the ground without shelter, sharing his blanket with John. He had used his own horses, and now if the government needed him, the government might mount him. He had no furlough, and soon reported for duty; but not before he had moved us, early in January, into town — one of my brother-in-law's houses having been vacated at the beginning of the year. John knew his master too well to construe him literally, and had reserved the fine gray, Jubal Early, for his use. That I might not again fall into the sad plight in which he had found me, he purchased three hundred dollars in gold, and instructed me to prepare a girdle to be worn all the time around my waist, concealed by my gown. The coins were quilted in; each had a separate section to itself, so that with scissors I might extract one at a time without disturbing the rest.

CHAPTER XXI

EARLY in June the two armies of Grant and Lee confronted each other at Petersburg. My dear general had bidden a silent and most sad farewell to his little family and gone forth to join his company, when my father entered with great news. "I have just met General Lee in the street." "Passing through?" I asked. "Not at all! The lines are established just here and filled with his veterans." My general soon reëntered joyfully. He would now be on duty near us.

The next Sunday a shell fell in the Presbyterian Church opposite our house. From that moment we were shelled at intervals, and very severely. There were no soldiers in the city. Women were killed on the lower streets, and an exodus from the shelled districts commenced at once.

As soon as the enemy brought up his siege guns of heavy artillery, they opened on the city with shell without the slightest notice, or without giving opportunity for the removal of non-combatants, the sick, the wounded, or the women and children. The fire was at first directed toward the Old Market, presumably because of the railroad depot situated there, about which the soldiers might be supposed to collect. But the guns soon enlarged their operations, sweeping all the streets in the business part of the city, and then invading the residential region.

The steeples of the churches seemed to afford targets for their fire, all of them coming in finally for a share of the compliment.

To persons unfamiliar with the infernal noise made by the screaming, ricocheting, and bursting of shells, it is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the terror and demoralization which ensued. Some families who could not leave the besieged city dug holes in the ground, five or six feet deep, covered with heavy timber banked over with earth, the entrance facing opposite the batteries from which the shells were fired. They made these bombproofs safe, at least, and thither the family repaired when heavy shelling commenced. General Lee seemed to recognize that no part of the city was safe, for he immediately ordered the removal of all the hospitals, under the care of Petersburg's esteemed physician, Dr. John Herbert Claiborne. There were three thousand sick and wounded, many of them too ill to be moved. Everything that could run on wheels, from a dray to a wheelbarrow, was pressed into service by the fleeing inhabitants of the town. A long, never ending line passed my door until there were no more to pass.

The spectacle fascinated my children, and they lived in the open watching it. One day my little friend Nannie with my baby, nearly as large as herself, in her arms, stood at the gate when a shell fell some distance from them. A mounted officer drew rein and accosted her. "Whose children are these?"

"This is Charles Campbell's daughter," said little

Nannie, "and this" — indicating the baby — "is General Pryor's child."

"Run home with General Pryor's baby, little girl, away from the shells," he said, and turning as he rode off, "My love to your father. I'm coming to see him."

"Who is that man?" little Nannie inquired of a bystander.

"Why, don't you know? That's General Lee!"

We soon learned the peculiar deep boom of the one great gun which bore directly upon us. The boys named it "Long Tom." Sometimes for several weeks "Long Tom" rested or slept — and would then make up for lost time. And yet we yielded to no panic. The children seemed to understand that it would be cowardly to complain. One little girl cried out with fright at an explosion, but her aunt, Mrs. Gibson, called her and said: "My dear, you cannot make it harder for other people! If you feel very much afraid, come to me, and I will take you in my arms, but you mustn't cry."

Charles Campbell, the historian, lived near us, at the Anderson Seminary. He cleared out the large coal cellar, which was fortunately dry, spread rugs on the floor, and furnished it with lounges and chairs. There we took refuge in utter darkness when the firing was unbearable. My next-door neighbor, Mr. Thomas Branch, piled bags of sand around his house and thus made it bomb-proof. One day a shell struck one of my chimneys and buried itself, hissing, at the front door. Away we went to Mr. Campbell's bomb-proof cellar, and there we remained until the paroxysmal shelling ceased.

One night, after a long, hot day, we were so tired we slept soundly. I was awakened by Eliza Page, standing trembling beside me. She pulled me out of bed and hurriedly turned to throw blankets around the children. The furies were let loose! The house was shaking with the concussion from the heavy guns. We were in the street, on our way to our bomb-proof cellar, when a shell burst not more than twenty-five feet before us. Fire and fragments rose like a fountain in the air and fell in a shower around us. Not one of my little family was hurt — and strange to say, the children were not terrified!

Another time a shell fell in our own yard and buried itself in the earth. My baby was not far away in her nurse's arms. The little creature was fascinated by the shells. The first word she ever uttered was an attempt to imitate them. "Yonder comes that bird with the broken wing," the servants would say. The shells made a fluttering sound as they traversed the air, descending with a frightful hiss. When they exploded in mid-air, a puff of smoke, white as an angel's wing, would drift away, and the particles would patter down like hail. At night the track of the shell and its explosion were precisely similar to our Fourth of July rockets, except that they were fired, not upward, but in a slanting direction,—not aimed at the stars, but aimed at us! I never felt afraid of them! I was brought up to believe in predestination. Courage, after all, is much a matter of nerves. My neighbors, Mr. and

Mrs. Gibson, Mrs. Meade, and Mr. and Mrs. Campbell, agreed with me, and we calmly elected to remain in town. There was no place of safety accessible to us. Mr. Branch removed his family, and, as far as I knew, none other of my friends remained throughout the summer.

Not far from our own door ran a sunken street, with the hill, through which it was cut, rising each side of it. Into this hill the negroes burrowed, hollowing out a small space, where they sat all day on mats, knitting, singing, and selling small cakes made of sorghum and flour, and little round meat pies.

The antiphonal songs, with their weird melody, still linger in my memory. At night above the dull roar of the guns, the keen hiss of the shells as they fell, the rattle and rumble of the army wagons, a strong voice from the colony of hillside huts would ring out: —

"My brederin do-o-n't be weary,
De angel brought de tidin's down.
Do-o-n't be weary
For we're gwine home!

"I want to go to heaven!
(*Answer*) Yas, my Lawd!
I want to see my Jesus!
(*Answer*) Yas, my Lawd!

(*Chorus*) "My brederin do-o-n't be weary,
De angel brought de tidin's down.
Do-o-n't be weary
For we're gwine home."

The sorghum cakes were made to perfection in our own kitchen, but the meat pies were fascinating.

I might have been tempted to invest in them but for a slight circumstance. I saw a dead mule lying on the common, and out of its side had been cut a very neat, square chunk of flesh!

With all our starvation we never ate rats, mice, or mule meat. We managed to exist on peas, bread, and sorghum. We could buy a little milk, and we mixed it with a drink made from roasted and ground corn. The latter, in the grain, was scarce. Mr. Campbell's children picked up the grains wherever the army horses were fed, washed, dried, and pounded them for food.

My little boys never complained, but Theo, who had insisted upon returning to me from his uncle's safe home in the country, said one day: "Mamma, I have a queer feeling in my stomach! Oh, no! it doesn't ache the least bit, but it feels like a nutmeg grater."

Poor little laddie! His machinery needed oiling. And pretty soon his small brother fell ill with fever. My blessed Dr. Withers obtained a permit for me to get a pint of soup every day from the hospital, and one day there was a joyful discovery. In the soup was a drumstick of chicken!

"I cert'nly hope I'll not get well," the little man shocked me by saying.

"Oh, is it as bad as that?" I sighed.

"Why," he replied, "my soup will be stopped if I get better!"

Just at this juncture, when things were as bad as could be, my husband brought home to tea the Hon. Pierre Soulé, General D. H. Hill, and General Longstreet. I had bread and a little tea, the latter served in a yellow pitcher without a handle. Mrs. Meade, hearing of my necessity, sent me a small piece of bacon. I had known Mr. Soulé in Washington society — of all men the most fastidious, most polished. When we assembled around the table, I lifted my hot pitcher by means of a napkin, and offered my tea, pure and simple, allowing the guests to use their discretion in regard to a spoonful or two of dark brown sugar.

"This is a great luxury, madam," said Mr. Soulé, with one of his gracious bows, "a good cup of tea."

We talked that night of all that was going wrong with our country, of the good men who were constantly relieved of their commands, of all the mistakes we were making.

"Mistakes!" said General Hill, bringing his clenched fist down upon the table, "I could forgive mistakes! I cannot forgive lies! I could get along if we could *only*, *only* ever learn the truth, the real truth." But he was very personal and used much stronger words than these.

The pictures my general had brought from Europe had been sent early from Washington to Petersburg, and I had opened one of the boxes which contained a large etching of Michelangelo's "Last Judgment." General Longstreet stood long before this picture, as it hung in our living room. Turning to Mr. Soulé and General Hill he exclaimed: "Oh, what does it all signify? *Here* is the end for every one of us!" — the end of all the strife, the bloodshed, the bitterness—the final victory or defeat.

They talked and talked, these veterans and the charming, accomplished diplomat, until one of them inquired the hour. I raised a curtain.

"Gentlemen," I said, "the sun is rising. You must now breakfast with us." They declined. They had supped!

In the terrible fight at Port Walthall near Petersburg, my husband rendered essential service. Among the few papers I preserved in a secret drawer of the only trunk I saved, were two, one signed Bushrod Johnson, the other D. H. Hill. The latter says: "The victory at Walthall Junction was greatly due to General Roger A. Pryor. But for him it is probable we might have been surprised and defeated." The other from General Johnson runs at length: "At the most critical juncture General Roger A. Pryor rendered me most valuable service, displaying great zeal, energy, and gallantry in reconnoitring the positions of the enemy, arranging my line of battle, and rendering successful the operations and movements of the conflict." At General Johnson's request my husband served with him during the midsummer. Such letters I have in lieu of medal or ribbon,—a part only of much of similar nature; but less was given to many a man who as fully deserved recognition.

Having been in active service in all the events around Petersburg, my husband was now requested by General Lee to take with him a small squad of men, and learn something of the movements of the enemy.

"Grant knows all about me," he said, "and I know too little about Grant. You were a schoolboy here, General, and have hunted in all the by-paths around Petersburg. Knowing the country better than any of us, you are the best man for this important duty."

Accordingly, armed with a pass from General Lee, my husband set forth on his perilous scouting expeditions, sometimes being absent a week at a time. During these scouting trips he had had adventures, narrow escapes, and also some opportunities for gratifying, what has ever been the controlling principle of his nature, the desire to help the unfortunate. Once he brought me early in the morning three or four prisoners under guard, and as he passed me on his way to snatch an hour's sleep, he calmly ordered, "Be sure to feed them well."

I find in an unpublished diary of Charles Campbell, the historian, this item: "I met Mrs. Pryor on her way to the commissary, with a small tin pail in her hand. She said she was going for her daily ration of meal." This "daily ration" for which I paid three dollars was all I had, except beans and sorghum, and John openly rebelled when ordered to serve it in loaves to my prisoners. However, he was overruled, and with perfect good humor my little boys acquiesced, gave up their own breakfast, and served the prisoners.

No farmer dared venture within the lines—no fish were in the streams, no game in the woods around the town. The cannonading had driven them away. There was no longer a market in Petersburg. I once, under shell fire, visited the Old Market. At the end of a table upon which cakes and jugs of sorghum molasses were exhibited, an aged negro offered a frozen cabbage!

The famine moved on apace, but its twin sister, fever, rarely visited us. Never had Petersburg been so healthy. Every particle of animal or vegetable food was consumed, and the streets were clean. Flocks of pigeons would follow the children who were eating bread or crackers. Finally the pigeons vanished, having been themselves eaten. Rats and mice disappeared. The poor cats staggered about the streets, and began to die of hunger. At times meal was the only article attainable, except by the rich. An ounce of meat daily was considered an abundant ration for each member of the family. To keep food of any kind was impossible — cows, pigs, bacon, flour, everything was stolen, and even sitting hens were taken from the nest.

In the presence of such facts as these General Lee was able to report that nearly every regiment in his army had reënlisted — and for the war! And very soon he also reported that the army was out of meat and had but one day's rations of bread! One of our papers copied the following from the *Mobile Advertiser*: —

> "In General Lee's tent meat is eaten but twice a week, the general not allowing it oftener, because he believes indulgence in meat to be criminal in the present straitened condition of the country. His ordinary dinner con-

General Robert E. Lee in 1861.

sists of a head of cabbage boiled in salt water and a pone of corn bread. Having invited a number of gentlemen to dine with him, General Lee, in a fit of extravagance, ordered a sumptuous repast of bacon and cabbage. The dinner was served, and behold, a great sea of cabbage and a small island of bacon, or 'middling,' about four inches long and two inches across. The guests, with commendable politeness, unanimously declined the bacon, and it remained in the dish untouched. Next day General Lee, remembering the delicate titbit which had been so providentially preserved, ordered his servant to bring that 'middling.' The man hesitated, scratched his head, and finally owned up: —

"'Marse Robert, — de fac' is, — dat ar middlin' was borrowed middlin'. We-all didn' have no middlin'. I done paid it back to de place whar I got it fum.'

"General Lee heaved a sigh of disappointment, and pitched into the cabbage."

Early in the autumn flour sold for $1500 a barrel, bacon $20 a pound, beef ditto, a chicken could be bought for $50, shad $5.50 a pair — the head of a bullock, horns and all, could be purchased, as a favor, from the commissary for $5. Groceries soared out of sight. I once counted in a soldier's ration eight grains of coffee! Little by little I drew from the belt of gold I wore around my waist, receiving towards the last one hundred dollars for one dollar in gold. These were anxious times, difficult times — but they were not the worst times! We still had hope. Any day, any hour might bring us victory and consequently relief. We had the blessed boon of comradeship. *Una et commune periclum, una salus!* Noble spirits were all around us, strong in faith and hope. Discouraging words were never uttered when we talked together.

My neighbor, Mrs. Meade and her daughters, were delightful friends, cheerful always. Soldiers were not allowed to wander about the streets, but one day I saw Mary Meade pause at her gate, just across the narrow street, and speak to one of them. "Do you know what he was asking me?" she ran over to say. "Isn't it too funny? A soldier with his gun on his shoulder wanted to know if we kept a dog, and if he could safely take a drink from the well!" A number of Englishmen hung about our camps near the close of the war. They were very agreeable, and while with us intensely Southern. I delighted in one who had hired rooms in Mrs. Meade's "office" opposite. He was so ardent a secessionist we honored him with the usual Southern title of "Colonel." He came over one morning in great indignation: "Oh, I say, it's a bit beastly of General Grant to frighten Mrs. Meade! It's a jolly shame to fire big shells into a lady's garden."

"What would you do, Colonel, if your chimney should be knocked off as mine was last week?"

"Well," — thoughtfully, — "I guess I'd toddle."

The time came when I felt that I could no longer endure the strain of being perpetually under fire, and to my great relief, my brother-in-law, Robert McIlwaine, removed his family to North Carolina, and placed Cottage Farm, three miles distant from the city, at my disposal. He had left a piano and some furniture in the house, and was glad to have me live in it.

I had been in this refuge only a few days, happy in the blessed respite from danger, when I learned that General Lee had established his headquarters a short distance from us.

The whole face of the earth seemed to change immediately. Army wagons crawled unceasingly in a fog of dust along the highroad, just in front of our gate. All was stir and life in the rear, where there was another country road, and a short road connecting the two passed immediately by the well near our house. This, too, was constantly travelled; the whir of the well-wheel never seemed to pause, day or night. We soon had pleasant visitors, General A. P. Hill, Colonel William Pegram, General Walker, General Wilcox, and others. General Wilcox, an old friend and comrade, craved permission to make his headquarters on the green lawn in the rear of the house, and my husband rejoiced at his presence and protection for our little family.

In less than twenty-four hours I found myself in the centre of a camp. The white tents of General Wilcox's staff-officers were stretched close to the door. "We are here for eight years — not a day less," said my father, and he fully believed it. This being the case, we brought all our boxes from town, unpacked the library and set it up on shelves, unpacked and hung our pictures. I hung the "Madonna della Seggiola" over the mantel in the parlor and Guido's "Aurora" over the piano. There was a baby house in one of the boxes and a trunk of evening dresses at which I did not even glance, but stored in the cellar. Everything looked so cosey and homelike, we were happier than we had been in a long time. That my infant should not starve, I bought a little cow, Rose, from a small planter in the neighborhood, for a liberal sum in gold from my belt. "We mus' all help one another these times," he observed complacently. Rose was a great treasure. My general's horse, Jubal Early, was required to share his rations with her — indeed, poor Jubal's allowance of corn was sometimes beaten into hominy for all of us. John at once built a shelter close to his own room for Rose, "'cause I knows soldiers! They gits up fo' day and milk yo' cow right under yo' eyelids. When we-all was in Pennsylvania, the ole Dutch farmers used to give Gen'al Lee Hail Columbia 'cause his soldiers milked their cows. But Lawd! Gen'al Lee couldn' help it! He could keep 'em from stealin' horses, but the queen of England herself couldn' stop a soldier when he hankers after milk. An' he don't need no pail, neither; he can milk in his canteen an' never spill a drop."

John and the boys were in fine spirits. They laid plans for chickens, pigeons, and pigs — none of which were realized, except the latter, which I persuaded a butcher to give me for one or two of the general's silk vests. As we were to be here "for eight years, no less," it behooved me to look after the little boys' education. School books were found for them. I knew "small Latin and less Greek," but I gravely heard them recite lessons in the former; and they never discovered the midnight darkness of my mind as to mathematics. As to the pigs, I had almost obtained my own consent to convert them into sausages when I was spared the pain of signing their death warrant by their running away!

I knew nothing of the strong line of fortifications which General Grant was building at the back of the farm, fortifications strengthened by forts at short intervals. Our own line — visible from the garden — had fewer forts, two of which, Fort Gregg and Battery 45, protected our immediate neighborhood. These forts occasionally answered a challenge, but there was no attempt at a sally on either side.

The most painful circumstance connected with our position was the picket firing at night, incessant, like the dropping of hail, and harrowing from the apprehension that many a man fell from the fire of a picket. But, perhaps to reassure me, Captain Lindsay and Captain Clover, of General Wilcox's staff, declared that "pickets have a good time. They fire, yes, for that is their business; but while they load for the next volley, one will call out, 'Hello, Reb,' be answered, 'Hello, Yank,' and little parcels of coffee are thrown across in exchange for a plug of tobacco." After accepting this fiction I could have made myself easy, but for my constant anxiety about the safety of my dear general. He was now employed day and night, often in peril, gleaning from every possible source information for General Lee. While absent on one of these scouting trips, he once met a lady who, with her children, was vainly trying to pass through the lines that she might return to her home at the North. Two years ago he received the following pleasant letter: —

" REPRESENTATIVE HALL,
" 29th SESSION
" NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE.
" LINCOLN, 3/19th, 1907.

" My dear Judge Pryor,

" I cannot resist the desire I have to write you concerning an incident of the war, in which you played such a noble and splendid part. You may have forgotten Mrs. Mary C. Burgess, whom, with three little children, you escorted with much personal risk through from the Confederate picket line to the Union line. You took two scouts. Each took a child on his horse, Mrs. Burgess walking. You stopped in a ravine and told Mrs. Burgess to go into the open field to the right where she would see a man on a gray horse to the left, she to signal this man, who would command her to come to him. She did so, and then came back after the children. You bade Mrs. Burgess good-by. She took the children and went again to the man on horseback. He took her to General Meade's headquarters, where she got orders to go to City Point, where she was detained two weeks, General Grant being absent, and she could go no farther without General Grant's orders. You will remember how Mrs. Burgess was sent to Mrs. Cumming's house with an escort of cavalry and infantry with a flag of truce. They were suspicious of the attention paid Mrs. Burgess, and at first were inclined to treat her as a spy. But after many hardships Mrs. Burgess finally reached New York and friends. Mrs. Burgess is my mother-in-law; is living with me; is the same dignified, cultivated lady whom you may remember. She is now in her seventy-fourth year. The splendid acts of kindness shown by you to her and the three children no doubt saved their lives. Mother Burgess sits here and wants you to know you occupy a lifelong place in her memory. For myself and all the family, I wish to say to you, Judge Pryor, that the English language does not contain words to express our admiration for your bravery, and our thankfulness to you for protecting the lone woman and children and the magnificent chivalry that prompted you like a true knight, which you are, to go to their rescue. I hope to have the honor and pleasure of seeing you and shaking your hand. With kindest of personal regard to you and all dear to you, I beg to remain,

"Yours sincerely,
"H. C. M. Burgess,
"1568 South 20th St.
"Lincoln, Neb."

CHAPTER XXII

THE morning of November 29, 1864, found me comfortably seated at my breakfast table with my little boys and my small brother, Campbell Pryor. My venerable father, Dr. Pryor, had departed on his daily rounds to visit the sick and wounded in the hospitals, and my husband was away on special duty for General Lee. John had reported early with one cupful of milk — all that little Rose, with her slender rations, was capable of yielding. This we had boiled with parched corn and sweetened with sorghum molasses. With perfect biscuits well beaten but unmixed with lard or butter we made a breakfast with which we were contented. I indulged myself in a long letter to my dear aunt, telling her of our comfortable home and the prospect of comparative quiet with the army soon to go into winter quarters. I had addressed my letter and was about to seal it when General Wilcox entered, and gently told me that my husband had been captured the day before!

I remember perfectly that I sat for a moment stunned into silence, and then quietly stamped my letter! I would spare my aunt the sad news for a while. In a few minutes clanking spurs at the door announced the presence of a staff-officer.

"Madam," he said respectfully, "General Lee sends you his affectionate sympathies."

Through the window I saw General Lee on his horse, Traveller, standing at the well. He waited until his messenger returned — I was too much overcome to speak — and then rode slowly towards the lines.

I had small hope of the speedy exchange promised me by General Wilcox. From day to day he reported the efforts made for my husband's release and their failure. General Lee authorized a letter to General Meade, detailing the circumstances of his capture and requesting his release. General Meade promptly refused to release him.

We naturally looked to the enemy for all information, and although my husband had written me a pencilled note at City Point on the inside of a Confederate envelope, and had implored his guard (a Federal officer) to have it inserted in a New York paper, I did not receive it until thirty-one years afterward. We soon had news, however, through a despatch from the Northern army to the *New York Herald*. The paper of November 30, 1864, contained the following: —

" Yesterday a rebel officer made his appearance in front of our lines, waving a paper for exchange. The officer in charge of the picket, suddenly remembering that Major Burrage, of the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts, was taken prisoner some time since by the enemy while on a similar errand, 'gobbled' the rebel, who proved to be the famous Roger A. Pryor, ex-member of Congress and ex-brigadier-general of Jeff Davis's army. He protested vehemently against what he styled 'a flagrant breach of faith' on our part. He was assured he was taken in retaliation for like conduct on the part of his friends, and sent to General Meade's headquarters for further disposition."

Press despatch to *Herald*, November 30, from Washington: "Roger A. Pryor has been brought to Washington and committed to the old Capitol Prison." Later a personal through the *New York News* reached me: "Your husband is in Fort Lafayette, where a friend and relative is permitted to visit him, (signed) Mary Rhodes." From an enormous quantity of letters, newspaper extracts, book notices, military reports, etc., describing his capture written by the men who made it and witnessed it, I select an interesting one, not hitherto published, which my husband received recently through my brother, the Mayor of Bristol.

"BRISTOL, TENN., July 10, 1908.

"HON. W. L. RICE,
"BRISTOL, VA.

"*My dear Mayor:* —

"I very cheerfully comply with your request to give you a short sketch of the circumstances which led to my selection as the Officer to convey Gen. R. A. Pryor to Fort Warren, Mass., in 1864. As an aid to my memory I have hunted over my old Army papers, and have found the original Order from the Military Governor of Washington, D.C., and also the receipt given me by Gen. Pryor for money which I turned over to him, on delivering him to the Commandant of Fort Lafayette, N. Y. Harbor, to which place my orders were afterwards changed and which papers I herewith attach.

"In November of 1864 my Regiment, the 39th Mass., was serving in the defences of Washington, and I had been detailed as an Aid on the staff of Gen. Martindale, then Commanding the Military District of Washington. Having received a Leave of Absence to visit my home in Mass., Col. T. McGowan, then Adjt. General of the District, kindly offered to place a prisoner in my charge and thus save to me my transportation. I did not know who my prisoner was to be, until my orders were received, and naturally felt pleased to find that my charge was to be Gen. Roger A. Pryor, whom I had known by reputation from my boyhood up.

"Though my Orders read that I was to assist Brig. General Wessels, I saw nothing of that gentleman until after General Pryor and myself had reached and taken seats in the train. Then Gen. Wessels made himself known, and asked an introduction to Gen. Pryor.

"It was 9.30 at night when left Washington, and we did not reach New York until daylight next morning. When I received my prisoner at the Old Capitol Prison, I recall that the Supt., one Colonel Wood advised me to iron my charge, alleging that he was a dangerous man; but this I refused to do, taking only Gen. Pryor's verbal parole that he would not attempt to escape while in my custody. This Gen. Pryor cheerfully gave, and religiously kept while with me. On arrival at Jersey City we became in some way separated from Gen. Wessels, and crossed over by the Cortlandt Street Ferry to New York. As the hour was early we stopped for breakfast at the Courtland Street Hotel, then quite a pretentious Hostelry. After breakfast, and while preparing to leave the Hotel for the Qr. Mas. Gen. Dept. where I was to find my orders and transportation, I was surprised to find that the Rotunda of the Hotel was packed, evidently with friends of Gen. Pryor and for a short time it looked as if my prisoner would be taken from me, but the Gen. directing me to take his arm, we passed through without trouble. At the Quarter Master Genl's I found my orders changed, and I was directed to convey my prisoner to Fort Lafayette New York Harbor in place of Fort Warren Boston Harbor. On arrival at Fort Lafayette we found Brig. Gen. Wessels awaiting us, and with him we proceeded across the ferry turning over our prisoner to Major Burke, Commandant at that Fort, taking his receipt therefor.

"At this distance of time (44 years) it would seem that these occurrences must have passed from my memory, but I remember with distinctness the appearance of the General, the incident at the Old Capitol, the crowd in the Rotunda of the Cortlandt Hotel, the miraculous passage through the sea of 'Red' faces therein, and the appearance of Major Paddy Burke (a very old Officer of the Old Army) to whose custody I transferred my charge. I recall also the kind expressions of regard uttered by General Pryor as we shook hands at parting and the promise he extracted that should it be my fate to be wounded or a prisoner in Richmond, during the war, that I would make myself known to his family there residing, who would respond to any appeal made by me. It was my fortune to pass through the remaining months of the war without being captured, and never severely wounded, so I did not have to call on the generosity of a gallant foe, and I presume the memory of that journey to New York, and the memory of the stripling Officer who accompanied him on that journey, long ago passed from Judge Pryor's memory, but I recall it as a pleasant episode in a boy's life and I would wish, that in writing to the Judge, you would kindly convey to him my sincere congratulations on the honors he has attained, and the respect and love which he has received in his declining years, and with kindest wishes to yourself, believe me,

"Very truly yours,
"WM. G. SHEEN."

WGS–OMH

Mr. Sheen kindly sent my brother the order to which he alludes: —

"HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

"PROVOST MARSHAL'S OFFICE

"WASHINGTON, D.C., Nov. 29th, 1864.

"Special Orders
No. 217

"*Extract*

"It is hereby Ordered! That *Brigadier Gen'l, H. W. Wessels* assisted by *Lieut. Wm. G. Sheen* will proceed to Old Capital Prison and taken in charge the following named prisoner:

"*Roger A. Pryor 7th Va: Car*

and deliver him together with the accompany papers to the Commanding Officer at Fort Warren Boston Harbor take a receipt therefore and report action at these Head Quarters.

"The Quartermaster Department will furnish the necessary transportation.

"By Command of Col. M. N. WISERVELL,
"Military Governor.
"GEO. R. WALBRIDGE,
"Capt & Asst Pro. Marshal."

It will be perceived by the above that the Federal officers granted their captured private the honor of escort by a Federal general — Brigadier-general H. W. Wessels — and were inclined to confer upon him the further distinction of "irons."

While he was detained in Washington, Major Leary (or Captain) discovered a plot to assassinate him, which he revealed to the prisoner, arranging for his greater safety. Before he reached Fort Lafayette it appears he was threatened with assassination and also rescue. Some kind friend in Washington thrust into his overcoat pocket a bottle of brandy. It was taken from him when his pockets were searched, along with his letters and pistols, but returned by a Federal officer, who remarked,—recognizing the touch of nature which establishes the kinship of all men in all nations,—"Keep it, General! There's an almighty sight of comfort in a bottle of brandy." The pistols were not returned and, along with an army cape, are preserved—I have understood—in a museum of war relics at Concord, Mass.

A month elapsed before all the forms required by military law could be observed in sending the letters of prisoners through the lines. At last Colonel Ould forwarded to me a brief assurance of my dear captive's welfare. He was confined in a casemate with twelve other prisoners. A grate held a small quantity of coal, and on this fire the captive soldiers cooked their slender rations of meat. Their bread was furnished them from a baker. They lay upon straw mats on the floor. They were glad of the rule compelling them to fetch up their fuel from the coal cellar, as it gave opportunity for exercise. Once daily they could walk upon the ramparts, and my husband's eyes turned sadly to the dim outlines of the beautiful city where he had often been an honored guest. The veil which hid from him so much of the grief and struggle of the future hid also the reward. Little did he dream he should administer justice on the supreme bench of the mist-veiled city.

The captives had no material except coal and water, but of the former they manufactured seal rings (to be set when they regained their liberty), inlaying a polished ebony surface with bits from a silver coin to represent tiny Confederate flags. One of these was given to my general, and lost in the great hour of losses. With the coal as a pencil, the prisoners indulged in caricatures of the commandant. Every morning a fresh picture on the whitewashed wall met his eye: "Burk as a baby," "Burk in his first pants," "Burk in love," etc., etc. The reward was the commandant's face when he saw them.

After my husband's release, his place in the casemate was filled by a "stylish" young officer who refused, absolutely, to submit to the degradation of bringing up his quota of the coal.

"And so," said "old Burk," "you are too great a man, are you, to fetch your coal? I had General Pryor here. He brought up his coal! I think, sir, you'll bring up yours!"

Before I take leave of my dear captive for the winter, I must record his unvarying fortitude under much physical discomfort, cold, and food which almost destroyed him. On the 20th of December, I received a brief note from Fort Lafayette: "My philosophy begins to fail somewhat. In vain I seek some argument of consolation. I see no chance of release. The conditions of my imprisonment cut me off from every resource of happiness."

I learned afterward that he was ill, and often under the care of a physician during the winter, but he tried to write as encouragingly as possible. In February, however, he failed in health and spirits.

"I am as contented as is compatible with my condition. My mind is ill at ease from my solicitude for my family and my country. Every disaster pierces my soul like an arrow; and I am afflicted with the thought that I am denied the privilege of contributing even my mite to the deliverance of ——. How I envy my old comrades their hardships and privations! I have little hope of an early exchange, and you may be assured my mistrust is not without reason. *Except some special instance be employed to procure my release, my detention here will be indefinite.* I cannot be more explicit. While this is my conviction, I wish it distinctly understood that I would not have my government compromise any scruple for the sake of my liberation. I am prepared for any contingency — am fortified against any reverse of fortune."

The problem now confronting me was this: how could I maintain my children and myself? My husband's rations were discontinued. I sent my general's horse far into the interior, to be boarded with a farmer for his services, as I had no possible means of feeding him. My only supply of food was from my father's ration as chaplain. I had a part of a barrel of flour which a relative had sent me from a county now cut off from us. Quite a number of my old Washington servants had followed me, to escape the shelling, but they could not, of course, look to me for their support. My household included Eliza Page, Aunt Jinny, and Uncle Frank (old people and old settlers), and our faithful John. I frankly told John and Eliza my condition, but they elected to remain.

One day John presented himself with a heart-broken countenance and a drooping attitude of deep dejection. He had a sad story to tell. The agent of the estate to which he belonged was in town, and John had been commissioned to inform me that all the slaves belonging to the estate were to be immediately transferred to a Louisiana plantation for safety. Those of us who had hired these servants by the year were to be indemnified for our loss.

"How do you feel about it, John?" I asked.

The poor fellow broke down. "It will kill me," he declared. "I'll soon die on that plantation."

All his affectionate, faithful service, all his hardships for our sakes, rushed upon my memory. I bade him put me in communication with the agent. I found that I could save the boy only by buying him! A large sum of gold was named as the price. I unbuckled my girdle and counted my handful of gold — one hundred and six dollars. These I offered to the agent (who was a noted negro trader), and although it was far short of his figures, he made out my bill of sale receipted. Remembered to-day, this seems a wonderful act on my part. At the time it was the most natural thing in the world!

John soon appeared with smiling face and informed me with his thanks that he belonged to me!

"You are a free man, John," I said. "I will make out your papers and I can easily arrange for you to pass the lines."

"I know that," he said. "Marse Roger has often told me I was a free man. I never will leave you till I die. Papers, indeed! Papers nothing! I belong to you — that's where I belong."

All that dreadful winter he was faithful to his promise, cheerfully bearing, without wages, all the privations of the time. Sometimes when the last atom of food was gone, he would ask for money, sally forth with a horse and a light cart, and bring in peas and dried apples. Once a week we were allowed to purchase the head of a bullock, horns and all, from the commissary for the exclusive use of the servants — I would have starved first — and a small ration of rice was allowed us by the government. A one-armed boy, Alick, who had been reared in my father's family, now wandered in to find his old master, and installed himself as my father's servant.

The question that pressed upon me day and night was: "How, where, can I earn some money?" to be answered by the frightful truth that there could be no opening for me anywhere, because I could not leave my children.

One wakeful night, while I was revolving these things, a sudden thought darted, unbidden, into my sorely harassed mind: —

"Why not open the trunk from Washington? Something may be found there which can be sold."

At an early hour next morning John and Alick brought the trunk from the cellar. Aunt Jinny, Eliza, and the children gathered around. It proved to be full of my old Washington finery. There were a half-dozen or more white muslin gowns, flounced and trimmed with valenciennes lace, many yards; there was a rich bayadere silk gown trimmed fully with guipure lace; a green silk dress with gold embroidery; a blue-and-silver brocade, — these last evening gowns. There was a paper box containing the shaded roses I had worn to Lady Napier's ball, the ball at which Mrs. Douglas and I had dressed alike in gowns of tulle. Another box held the garniture of green leaves and gold grapes which had belonged to the green silk, and still another the blue-and-silver feathers for the brocade. An opera cloak trimmed with fur; a long purple velvet cloak; a purple velvet "coalscuttle" bonnet, trimmed with white roses; a point-lace handkerchief; valenciennes lace; Brussels lace; and in the bottom of the trunk a package of *ciel* blue zephyr, awakening reminiscences of a passion which I had cherished for knitting shawls and "mariposas" of zephyr, — such was the collection I discovered.

I ripped all the lace from the evening gowns and made large collars and undersleeves then in vogue. John found a closed dry-goods store willing to sell clean paper boxes.

My first instalment was sent to Price's store in Richmond and promptly sold. I sold the silk gowns minus the costly trimming; but when I had stripped the muslin flounces of lace, behold raw edges that no belle, even a Confederate, could have worn. I rolled the edges of these flounces — there were ten or twelve on some of the gowns — and edged them with a spiral line of blue zephyr. I embroidered a dainty vine of blue forget-me-nots on bodice and sleeves, with a result simply ravishing!

After I had converted all my laces into collars, cuffs, and sleeves, and had sold my silk gowns, opera cloak, and point-lace handkerchiefs, I devoted myself to trimming the edges of the artificial flowers, and separating the long wreaths and garlands into clusters for hats and *bouquets de corsage.*

Eliza and the children delighted in this phase of my work, and begged to assist, — all except Aunt Jinny.

"Honey," she said, "don't you think, in these times of trouble, you might do better than tempt them po' young lambs in Richmond to worship the golden calf and bow down to mammon? We prays not to be led into temptation, and you sho'ly is leadin' 'em into vanity."

"Maybe so, Aunt Jinny, but I must sell all I can. We have to be clothed, you know, war or no war."

"Yes, my chile, that's so; but we're told to consider the lilies. Gawd Almighty tells us we must clothe ourselves in the garment of righteousness, and He —"

"You always 'pear to be mighty intimate with God A'mighty," interrupted Eliza, in great wrath. "Now you just run 'long home an' leave my mistis to her work. How would *you* look with nothin' on but a garment of righteousness?"

When I had stripped the pretty silk gowns of their trimmings, what could be done with the gowns themselves? Finally I resolved to embroider them. The zeal with which I worked knew no pause. I needed no rest. General Wilcox, who was in the saddle until a late hour every night, said to me, "Your candle is the last light I see at night — the first in the morning."

"I should never sleep," I told him.

One day I consulted Eliza about the manufacture of a Confederate candle. We knew how to make it — by drawing a cotton rope many times through melted wax, and then winding it around a bottle. We could get the wax, but our position was an exposed one. Soldiers' tents were close around us, and we scrupulously avoided any revelation of our needs, lest they should deny themselves for our sakes. Eliza thought we might avail ourselves of the absence of the officers, and finish our work before they returned. We made our candle behind the kitchen; but that night, as I sat sewing beside its dim, glowworm light, I heard a step in the hall, and a hand, hastily thrust out, placed a brown paper parcel on the piano near the door. It was a soldier's ration of candles!

Of course I could not find shoes for my boys. I made little boots of carpet lined with flannel for my baby. A pair lasted just three days. A large bronze morocco pocket-book fell into my hands, of which I made boots for my little Mary. Alick, — prowling about the fields to gather the herb "life everlasting," of which we made yeast, — found two or three leather bags, and a soldier shoemaker contrived shoes for each of my boys.

My own prime necessity was for the steel we women wear in front of our stays. I suffered so much for want of this accustomed support, that Captain Lindsay had a pair made for me by the government gunsmith — the best I ever had.

The time came when the salable contents of the Washington trunk were all gone. I then cut up my husband's dress-coat, and designed well-fitting ladies' gloves, with gauntlets made of the watered silk lining. Of an interlining of gray flannel I made gray gloves, and this glove manufacture yielded me hundreds of dollars. Thirteen small fragments of flannel were left after the gloves were finished. Of these, pieced together, I made a pair of drawers for my Willy, — my youngest boy.

The lines around us were now so closely drawn that my father returned home after short absences of a day or two. But we were made anxious, during a heavy snow early in December, by a more prolonged absence. Finally he appeared, on foot, hatless, and exhausted. He had been captured by a party of cavalrymen. He had told them of his non-combatant position, but when he asked for release, they shook their heads. At night they all prepared to bivouac upon the ground ; assigned him a sheltered spot, gave him a good supper and blankets, and left him to his repose. As the night wore on and all grew still, he raised his head cautiously to reconnoitre, and to his surprise found himself at some distance from the guard — but his horse tied to a tree within the circle around the fire. My father took the hint and walked away unchallenged, "which proves, my dear," he said, "that a clergyman is not worth as much as a good horse in time of war."

CHAPTER XXIII

IN the colony escaped from the shells and huddled together around General Lee were two very humble poor women who often visited me. One of them was the proud owner of a cow, "Morning-Glory," which she contrived to feed from the refuse of the camp kitchens, receiving in return a small quantity of milk, to be sold at prices beyond belief. I never saw Morning-Glory, but I often heard her friendly echo to the lowing of my little Rose, morning and evening. Being interpreted, it might have been found to convey an expression of surprise that either was still alive, so slender was their allowance of food.

One day I espied, coming down the dusty road, the limp, sunbonneted figure of Morning-Glory's mistress. She sank upon the nearest chair, pushed back her calico bonnet, and revealed a face blurred with tears and hair dishevelled beyond the ordinary.

"Good morning, Mrs. Jones! Come to the fire! It's a cold morning."

"No'm, I ain't cole! It's — it's" (sobbing) — "it's Mornin'-Glory!"

"Not sick? If she is, I'll —"

"No'm, Mornin'-Glory ain't never goin' to be sick no mo'."

"Oh, Mrs. Jones! *Not dead!*"

"Them pickets kep' me awake all las' night, an' I got up in the night an' went out to see how Mornin'-Glory was gettin' on, an' she — she — she look at me jus' the same! An' I slep' soun' till after sun-up, and when I got my pail an' went out to milk her — *thar was her horns an' hufs!*"

The poor woman broke down completely in telling me the ghastly story. "Oh, how wicked! How was it possible to take her off and nobody hear?" I exclaimed in great wrath.

"I don't know, Mis' Pryor, nothin' but what I tells you. Talk to me 'bout Yankees! Soldiers is soldiers, an' when you say *that*, you jus' as well say devils is devils."

My other poor neighbor had long been a pensioner on my father. She was a forlorn widow with many children, hopeless and helpless. My father was in despair when she turned up "to git away from the shellin'." She found a small untenanted house near us and set up an establishment which was supported altogether by boarding an occasional soldier on sick leave, and taking his rations as her pay. Like Mrs. Jones, she was a frequent visitor to my fireside. One morning, after some unusual demonstrations of coy shyness, she blurted out: "I knows fo' I begin what you goin' to say! You goin' to tell me Ma'y Ann is a fool, an' I won't say you ain't in the rights of it."

"Well, what is Mary Ann's folly? I thought she had grown up to be a sensible girl."

"*Sensible! Ma'y Ann!* Them pretty gals is never sensible! No'm. Melissy Jane is the sensible one o' my chillun. I tole Ma'y Ann she didn't have nothin' fitten to be ma'ied in, an' she up an' say she know Mis' Pryor ain' goin' to let one o' her pa's chu'ch people git ma'ied in rags."

"I certainly will not, Mrs. Davis! Mary Ann, I suppose, is to marry the soldier you've been taking care of. Tell her she may look to me for a wedding-dress. When is it to be?"

"Just as Dr. Pryor says — to-morrow if convenient."

I immediately overhauled the bundle of Washington finery and found a lavender Pina, or "pineapple" muslin, not yet prepared for sale. This was a delicate gown, trimmed with lavender silk, and with angel sleeves lined with white silk. This I sent to the prospective bride — considering her needs and station, a most unsuitable wedding garment, but all I had! I managed to make a contribution to the wedding supper, a large pumpkin I extorted from John, who had "found" it. Melissy Jane, homely enough to be brilliantly "sensible," appeared to take charge of the present, — the most slatternly, unlovely, and altogether unpromising of the poor white class I had ever seen; and my father, in view of the great good fortune coming to the forlorn family in the acquisition of an able-bodied, whole-hearted Confederate soldier, made no delay in performing the marriage ceremony. About a week afterward Mrs. Davis, limper than ever, more depressed than ever, reappeared.

"I hope nobody's sick?" I inquired.

"No'm, the chilluns is as peart as common. Ma'y Ann don't seem no ways encouraged. 'Pears like she's onreconciled."

"Why, what ails poor Mary Ann?"

"Yas'm — he's lef' her! Jus' took hisself off and never say nuthin'. We-all don't even know what company owns him."

"Mrs. Davis!" I exclaimed, in great indignation, "this is not to be tolerated. That man is to be found and made to do his duty. I can manage it!"

"I don't know as I keers to ketch 'im," sighed the poor woman. "Ef you capters them men erginst ther will, they'll git away ergin — *sho!* Let 'im go long! He ain't paid me a cent or a ration of meat an' meal sence he was ma'ied. Anyhow," she proudly added, "*Ma'y Ann is ma'ied!* Folks can't fling it up to 'er now as she's a ole maid," — which proves that maternal ambitions are peculiar to no condition of life.

Looking back, and living over again these stern times, it seems to me little short of a miracle that we actually did exist upon the slender portion of food allotted us. We could rarely see, from one day to another, just how we were to be fed. "Give us this day our daily bread" — this petition was our sole reliance. And as surely as the day would come,

"He that doth the ravens feed,
Yea, providently caters for the sparrow,"

would prove to us that we were of more value in His sight than many sparrows.

General Lee passed my door every Sunday morning on his way to a little wooden chapel nearer his quarters than St. Paul's Church. I have a picture of him in my memory, in his faded gray overcoat and slouch hat, bending his head before the sleet on stormy mornings. Sometimes his cousin, Mrs. Banister, could find herself warranted by circumstances to invite him to dine with her. Once she received from a country friend a present of a turkey, and General Lee consented to share it with her. She helped him at dinner to a moderate portion, for there was only one turkey — like Charles Lamb's hare — and many friends! Mrs. Banister observed the general laying on one side of his plate part of his share of the turkey, and she regretted his loss of appetite. "Madam," he explained, "Colonel Taylor is not well, and I should be glad to be permitted to take this to him."

After an unusually mild season, John bethought himself of the fishes in the pond and streams, but not a fishhook was for sale in Richmond or Petersburg. He contrived, out of a cunning arrangement of pins, to make hooks, and sallied forth with my boys. But the water was too cold, or the fish had been driven down-stream by the firing. The usual resource of the sportsman with an empty creel — a visit to the fishmonger — was quite out of the question. There was no fishmonger any more.

Under these circumstances you may imagine my sensation at receiving the following note: —

"My dear Mrs. Pryor: General Lee has been honored by a visit from the Hon. Thomas Connolly, Irish M.P. from Donegal.

"He ventures to request you will have the kindness to give Mr. Connolly a room in your cottage, if this can be done without inconvenience to yourself."

Certainly I could give Mr. Connolly a room; but just as certainly I could not feed him! The messenger who brought me the note hastily reassured me. He had been instructed to say that Mr. Connolly would mess with General Lee. I turned Mr. Connolly's room over to John, who soon became devoted to his service. The M.P. proved a most agreeable guest, a fine-looking Irish gentleman with an irresistibly humorous, cheery fund of talk. He often dropped in at our biscuit toasting, and assured us that we were better provided than the commander-in-chief.

"'You should have seen 'Uncle Robert's' dinner to-day, madam! He had two biscuits, and he gave me one."

Another time Mr. Connolly was in high feather. "We had a glorious dinner to-day! Somebody sent 'Uncle Robert' a box of sardines."

General Lee, however, was not forgotten. On fine mornings quite a procession of little negroes, in every phase of raggedness, used to pass my door, each one bearing a present from the farmers' wives of buttermilk in a tin pail for General Lee. The army was threatened with scurvy, and buttermilk, hominy, and every vegetable that could be obtained was sent to the hospital.

Mr. Connolly interested himself in my boys' Latin studies.

"I am going home," he said, "and tell the English women what I have seen here: two boys reading Cæsar while the shells are thundering, and their mother looking on without fear."

"I am too busy keeping the wolf from my door," I told him, "to concern myself with the thunderbolts."

The wolf was no longer at the door! He had entered and had taken up his abode at the fireside. Besides what I could earn with my needle, I had only my father's army ration to rely upon. My faithful John foraged right and left, and I had reason to doubt the wisdom of inquiring too closely as to the source of an occasional half-dozen eggs or small bag of corn. This last he would pound on a wooden block for hominy. Meal was greatly prized for the reason that wholesomer bread could be made of it than of wheaten flour, — meal was no longer procurable, but we were never altogether without flour. As I have said, we might occasionally purchase for five dollars the head of a bullock from the commissary, every other part of the animal being available for army rations. By self-denial on our own part we fondly hoped we could support our army and at last win our cause. We were not, at the time, fully aware of the true state of things in the army. Our men were so depleted from starvation that the most trifling wound would end fatally. Gangrene would supervene, and then nothing could be done to prevent death. Long before this time, at Vicksburg, Admiral Porter found that many a dead soldier's haversack yielded nothing but a handful of parched corn. *We* were now enduring a sterner siege. The month of January brought us sleet and storm. Our famine grew sterner every day. Seasons of bitter cold weather would find us without wood to burn, and we had no other fuel. I commenced cutting down the choice fruit trees in the grounds, — and General Wilcox managed to send me a load of rails from a fence, hitherto spared by the soldiers. Poor little Rose could yield only one cupful of milk, so small was her ration; but we never thought of turning the faithful animal into beef. The officers in my yard spared her something every day from the food of their horses.

The days were so dark and cheerless, the news from the armies at a distance so discouraging, it was hard to preserve a cheerful demeanor for the sake of the family. And now began the alarming tidings, every morning, of the desertions during the night. General Wilcox wondered how long his brigade would hold together at the rate of fifty desertions every twenty-four hours!

The common soldier had enlisted, not to establish the right of secession, not for love of the slave, — he had no slaves, — but simply to resist the invasion of the South by the North, simply to prevent subjugation. The soldier of the rank and file was not always intellectual or cultivated. He cared little for politics, less for slavery. He did care, however, for his own soil, his own little farm, his own humble home, and he was willing to fight to drive the invader from it. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation did not stimulate him in the least. The negro, free or slave, was of no consequence to him. His quarrel was a sectional one, and he fought for his section.

In any war the masses rarely trouble themselves about the merits of the quarrel. Their pugnacity and courage are aroused and stimulated by the enthusiasm of their comrades or by their own personal wrongs and perils.

Now, in January, 1865, the common soldier perceived that the cause was lost. He could read its doom in the famine around him, in the faces of his officers, in tidings from abroad. His wife and children were suffering. His duty was now to them; so he stole away in the darkness, and in infinite danger and difficulty found his way back to his own fireside. He deserted, but not to the enemy.

But what shall we say of the soldier who remained unflinching at his post *knowing* the cause was lost for which he was called to meet death? Heroism can attain no loftier height than this. Very few of the intelligent men of our army had the slightest hope, at the end, of our success. Some, like Mr. William C. Rives, had none at the beginning.

One night all these things weighed more heavily than usual upon me, — the picket firing, the famine, the military executions, the dear one "sick and in prison." I sighed audibly, and my son Theodorick, who slept near me, asked the cause, adding, "Why can you not sleep, dear mother?"

"Suppose," I replied, "you repeat something for me."

He at once commenced, "Tell me not in mournful numbers" — and repeated the "Psalm of Life." I did not sleep; those were brave words, but not strong enough for the situation.

He paused, and presently his young voice broke the stillness: —

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name" — going on to the end of the beautiful psalm of adoration and faith which nineteen centuries have decreed to be in very truth a Psalm of Life.

That General Lee was acutely sensible of our condition was proved by an interview with General Gordon. Before daylight, on the 2d of March, General Lee sent for General Gordon, who was with his command at a distant part of the line. Upon arriving, General Gordon was much affected by seeing General Lee standing at the mantel in his room, his head bowed on his folded arms. The room was dimly lighted by a single lamp, and a smouldering fire was dying on the hearth. The night was cold, and General Lee's room chill and cheerless.

"I have sent for you, General Gordon," said General Lee, with a dejected voice and manner, "to make known to you the condition of our affairs and consult with you as to what we had best do. I have here reports sent in from my officers to-night. I find I have under my command, of all arms, hardly forty-five thousand men. These men are starving. They are already so weakened as to be hardly efficient. Many of them have become desperate, reckless, and disorderly as they have never been before.

"It is difficult to control men who are suffering for food. They are breaking open mills, barns, and stores in search of it. Almost crazed from hunger, they are deserting in large numbers and going home. My horses are in equally bad condition. The supply of horses in the country is exhausted. It has come to be just as bad for me to have a horse killed as a man. I cannot remount a cavalryman whose horse dies. General Grant can mount ten thousand men in ten days and move round your flank. If he were to send me word to-morrow that I might move out unmolested, I have not enough horses to move my artillery. He is not likely to send me any such message, although he sent me word yesterday that he knew what I had for breakfast every morning. I sent him word I did not think that this could be so, for if he did he would surely send me something better.

"But now let us look at the figures. As I said, I have forty-five thousand starving men. Hancock has eighteen thousand at Winchester. To oppose him I have not a single vidette. Sheridan, with his terrible cavalry, has marched unmolested and unopposed along the James, cutting the railroads and the canal. Thomas is coming from Knoxville with thirty thousand well-equipped troops, and I have, to oppose him, not more than three thousand in all. Sherman is in North Carolina with sixty-five thousand men. So I have forty-five thousand poor fellows in bad condition opposed to one hundred and sixty thousand strong and confident men. These forces added to General Grant's make over a quarter of a million. To prevent them all from uniting to my destruction, and adding Johnston's and Beauregard's men, I can oppose only sixty thousand men. They are growing weaker every day. Their sufferings are terrible and exhausting. My horses are broken down and impotent. General Grant may press around our flank any day and cut off our supplies."

As a result of this conference General Lee went to Richmond to make one more effort to induce our government to treat for peace. It was on his return from an utterly fruitless errand that he said: —

"I am a soldier! It is my duty to obey orders;" and the final disastrous battles were fought.

It touches me to know now that it was after this that my beloved commander found heart to turn aside and bring me comfort. No one knew better than he all I had endeavored and endured, and my heart blesses his memory for its own sake. At this tremendous moment, when he had returned from his fruitless mission to Richmond, when the attack on Fort Steadman was impending, when his slender line was confronted by Grant's ever increasing host, stretching twenty miles, when the men were so starved, so emaciated, that the smallest wound meant death, when his own personal privations were beyond imagination, General Lee could spend half an hour for my consolation and encouragement.

Cottage Farm being on the road between headquarters and Fort Gregg, — the fortification which held General Grant in check at that point, — I saw General Lee almost daily going to this work or to Battery 45.

I was, as was my custom, sewing in my little parlor one morning, about the middle of March, when an orderly entered, saying: —

"General Lee wishes to make his respects to Mrs. Pryor." The general was immediately behind him. His face was lighted with the anticipation of telling me his good news. With the high-bred courtesy and kindness which always distinguished his manner, he asked kindly after my welfare, and taking my little girl in his arms, began gently to break his news to me: —

"How long, madam, was General Pryor with me before he had a furlough?"

"He never had one, I think," I answered.

"Well, did I not take good care of him until we camped here so close to you?"

"Certainly," I said, puzzled to know the drift of these preliminaries.

"I sent him home to you, I remember," he continued, "for a day or two, and you let the Yankees catch him. Now he is coming back to be with you again on parole until he is exchanged. You must take better care of him in future."

I was too much overcome to do more than stammer a few words of thanks.

Presently he added, "What are you going to say when I tell the general that in all this winter you have never once been to see me?"

"Oh, General Lee," I answered, "I had too much mercy to join in your buttermilk persecution!"

"Persecution!" he said; "such things keep us alive! Last night, when I reached my headquarters, I found a card on my table with a hyacinth pinned to it, and these words: 'For General Lee, with a kiss!' Now," he added, tapping his breast, "I have here my hyacinth and my card — *and I mean to find my kiss!*"

He was amused by the earnest eyes of my little girl, as she gazed into his face.

"They have a wonderful liking for soldiers," he said. "I knew one little girl to give up all her pretty curls willingly that she might look like Custis! 'They *might* cut my hair like Custis's,' she said. Custis! whose shaven head does not improve him in any eyes but hers."

His manner was the perfection of repose and simplicity. As he talked with me, I remembered that I had heard of this singular calmness. Even at Gettysburg and at the explosion of the crater he had evinced no agitation or dismay. I did not know then, as I do now, that nothing had ever approached the anguish of this moment, when he had come to say an encouraging and cheering word to me, after abandoning all hope of the success of the cause.

After talking awhile and sending a kind message to my husband, to greet him on his return, he rose, walked to the window, and looked over the fields, — the fields through which, not many days afterward, he dug his last trenches!

I was moved to say, "You only, General, can tell me if it is worth my while to put the ploughshare into those fields."

"Plant your seeds, madam," he replied; sadly adding, after a moment, " The doing it will be some reward."

I was answered. I thought then he had little hope. I now know he had none.

He had already, as we have seen, remonstrated against further resistance — against the useless shedding of blood. His protest had been unheeded. It remained for him now to gather his forces for endurance to the end.

Twenty days afterward his headquarters were in ashes; he had led his famished army across the Appomattox, and telling them they had done their duty and had nothing to regret, he had bidden them farewell forever.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE day drew near when the husband and father of our little family was to be restored to his own home and his own people. Paroled, and not yet exchanged, we could hope for a brief visit from him. John was in a great state over the possibilities of a welcoming banquet. Peas, beans, flour, sorghum molasses, — these in small quantity he might hope to command. A nourishing soup could be made of the peas, and if only he could "find" an egg, he could mix it with sorghum and bake it in an unshortened open crust for dessert. But the meat course!

Just at this critical moment a hapless duck ventured too near John's acquisitive hand while he was on one of his prowling expeditions. This he perfectly roasted and presented to me to be sacredly kept until the general's arrival. Accordingly I hid it away in a small safe with wire-netting doors, and judiciously covered it over with a cloth lest some child or visitor should be led into irresistible temptation.

We were all expectation and excitement when a lady drove up and asked for shelter, as she had been "driven in from the lines." Shelter and lodging I could give by spreading quilts on the parlor floor — but, alas, my duck! Must my precious duck be sacrificed upon the altar of hospitality? I peeped into the little safe to assure myself that I could manage to keep it hidden, and behold, it was gone! Not until next day, when it was placed before my husband with a triumphant flourish (our unwelcome guest had departed), did I discover that John had stolen it! "Why, there's the duck!" I exclaimed.

"'Course here's the duck!" said John, respectfully. "Ducks got plenty of sense. They knows as well as folks when to hide."

We found our released prisoner pale and thin, but devoutly thankful to be at home. Mr. Connolly and the officers around us called in the evening, keenly anxious to hear his story and heartily expressing their joy at his release. My friends in Washington had wished to send me some presents, but my husband declined them, accepting only two cans of pineapple. Mr. Connolly sent out for the "boys in the yard" and assisted me in dividing the fruit into portions, so each one should have a bit. It was served on all the saucers and butter plates we could find, and Mr. Connolly himself handed the tray around, exclaiming, "Oh, lads! it is just the *best* thing you ever tasted!" Then each soldier brought forth his brier-root and gathered around the traveller for his story. His story was a thrilling one — of his capture, his incarceration, his comrades; finally of the unexpected result of the efforts of his ante-bellum friends, Washington McLean and John W. Forney, for his release.

It was ascertained by these friends in Washington that he was detained as hostage for the safety of some

Union officer whom the Confederate government had threatened to put to death. This situation of affairs left General Pryor in a very dangerous position. Southern leaders were inclined to take revenge upon some prominent Union soldiers in their prisons, and Stanton stood ready to take counter-revenge upon the body of "Harry Hotspur." Washington McLean, the editor and proprietor of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, had met my husband while he was in Congress, and learned "to like and love him," as one expressed it. Realizing the gravity of his friend's situation, Mr. McLean, having first approached General Grant, who positively refused to consider General Pryor's release, resolved to appeal to Mr. Stanton. He found Mr. Stanton in the library of his own home, with his daughter in his arms, and the following conversation ensued:—

"This is a charming fireside picture, Mr. Secretary! I warrant that little lady cares nothing for war or the Secretary of War! She has her father, and that fills all her ambition."

"You never said a truer word, did he, pet?" pressing the curly head close to his bosom.

"Well, then, Stanton, you will understand my errand. There are curly heads down there in old Virginia weeping out their bright eyes for a father loved just as this pretty baby loves you."

"Yes, yes! Probably so," said Stanton.

"Now — there's Pryor — "

But before another word could be said, the Secretary of War pushed the child from his knee and thundered:—

"He shall be hanged! Damn him!"

But he had reckoned without his host when he supposed that Washington McLean would not appeal from that verdict. Armed with a letter of introduction from Horace Greeley, Mr. McLean visited Mr. Lincoln. The President remembered General Pryor's uniformly generous treatment of prisoners who had, at various times, fallen into his custody, especially his capture at Manassas of the whole camp of Federal wounded, surgeons and ambulance corps, and his prompt parole of the same. Mr. Lincoln listened attentively, and after ascertaining all the facts, issued an order directing Colonel Burke, the commander at Fort Lafayette, to "deliver Roger A. Pryor into the custody of Colonel John W. Forney, Secretary of the Senate, to be produced by him whenever required."

Armed with this order, Mr. McLean visited Fort Lafayette, where he found his friend in close confinement in the casemate with other prisoners. Mr. McLean immediately secured his release and accompanied him to Washington and to Colonel Forney's house.

As is now well known, even a presidential command did not stand in the way of Stanton's vengeance. When he learned of General Pryor's release, his rage was unbounded, and he immediately issued orders to seize the prisoner wherever found, and announced his intention of hanging him, as a response to the threats of the Southern leaders. Colonel Forney was advised of this condition of affairs, and at his request his secretary, John Russell Young, afterwards Minister to China, went to the offices of the various Washington newspapers and gave each journal a brief account of how General Pryor had passed through Washington that evening, and under parole had entered into the rebel lines. As a matter of fact, he was at that time in Colonel Forney's house, and remained there for two more days. Stanton, however, was made to believe that his prey had escaped him, and therefore abandoned his hunt.

At that time John Y. Beall, a Confederate officer, was confined with General Pryor, having been, it was supposed, implicated in a conspiracy to set fire to hotels and museums in New York, derail and fire railroad trains. Young Beall protested innocence, but finally he was arrested, tried by court-martial, and sentenced to be hanged. He belonged to an influential Southern family, and was held in high esteem south of Mason and Dixon's line. Some of the officials of the Confederacy served notice on Secretary of War Stanton that if Beall was hanged, they would put the rope around the necks of a number of prominent Northern soldiers who at that time were in their custody. But the stern Stanton was relentless, and he only sent back word that if the threat was carried into execution, he would hang Pryor. Mr. McLean became interested in young Beall's fate, and suggested that if General Pryor would make a personal appeal in his behalf to President Lincoln, his execution might probably be prevented. To that end, Mr. McLean telegraphed a request to Mr. Lincoln, that he accord General

Pryor an interview, to which a favorable response was promptly returned. The next evening General Pryor, with Mr. McLean and Mr. Forney, called at the White House, and were graciously received by the President. General Pryor at once opened his intercession in behalf of Captain Beall; but although Mr. Lincoln evinced the sincerest compassion for the young man and an extreme aversion to his death, he felt constrained to yield to the assurance of General Dix, in a telegram just received, that the execution was indispensable to the security of the Northern cities. Mr. Lincoln then turned the conversation to the recent conference at Hampton Roads, the miscarriage of which he deplored with the profoundest sorrow. He said that had the Confederate government agreed to the reëstablishment of the Union and the abolition of slavery, the people of the South might have been compensated for the loss of their negroes and would have been protected by a universal amnesty, but that Mr. Jefferson Davis made the recognition of the Confederacy a condition *sine qua non* of any negotiations. Thus, he declared, would Mr. Davis be responsible for every drop of blood that should be shed in the further prosecution of the war, a futile and wicked effusion of blood, since it was then obvious to every sane man that the Southern armies must be speedily crushed. On this topic he dwelt so warmly and at such length that General Pryor inferred that he still hoped the people of the South would reverse Mr. Davis's action, and would renew the negotiations for peace. Indeed, he declared in terms that he could not believe the senseless obstinacy of Mr. Davis represented the sentiment of the South. It was apparent to General Pryor that Mr. Lincoln desired him to sound leading men of the South on the subject. Accordingly, on the general's return to Richmond, he did consult with Senator Hunter and other prominent men in the Confederacy, but with one voice they assured him that nothing could be done with Mr. Davis, and that the South had only to await the imminent and inevitable catastrophe.

The inevitable catastrophe marched on apace.

On the morning of April 2 we were all up early that we might prepare and send to Dr. Claiborne's hospital certain things we had suddenly acquired. An old farmer friend of my husband had loaded a wagon with peas, potatoes, dried fruit, hominy, and a little bacon, and had sent it as a welcoming present. We had been told of the prevalence of scurvy in the hospitals, and had boiled a quantity of hominy, and also of dried fruit, to be sent with the potatoes for the relief of the sick.

My husband said to me at our early breakfast: —

"How soundly you can sleep! The cannonading was awful last night. It shook the house."

"Oh, that is only Fort Gregg," I answered. "Those guns fire incessantly. I don't consider them. You've been shut up in a casemate so long you've forgotten the smell of powder."

Our father, who happened to be with us that morning, said: —

"By the bye, Roger, I went to see General Lee, and told him you seemed to be under the impression that if your division moves, you should go along with it. The general said emphatically: 'That would be violation of his parole, Doctor. Your son surely knows he cannot march with the army until he is exchanged.'"

This was a great relief to me, for I had been afraid of a different construction.

After breakfast I repaired to the kitchen to see the pails filled for the hospital, and to send Alick and John on their errand.

Presently a message was brought me that I must join my husband, who had walked out to the fortification behind the garden. I found a low earthwork had been thrown up during the night still nearer our house, and on it he was standing. My husband held out his hand and drew me up on the breastwork beside him. Negroes were passing, wheeling their barrows, containing the spades they had just used. Below was a plain, and ambulances were collecting and stopping at intervals. Then a slender gray line stretched across under cover of the first earthwork and the forts. Fort Gregg and Battery 45 were belching away with all their might, answered by guns all along the line. While we gazed on all this, the wood opposite seemed alive, and out stepped a division of bluecoats — muskets shining and banners flying in the morning sun. My husband exclaimed: "My God! What a line! They are going to fight here right away. Run home and get the children in the cellar."

When I reached the little encampment behind the house, I found the greatest confusion.

Tents were struck, and a wagon was loading with them.

Captain Glover rode up to me and conjured me to leave immediately. I reminded him of his promise not to allow me to be surprised.

"We are ourselves surprised," he said; "believe me, your life is not safe here a moment." Tapping his breast, he continued, "I bear despatches proving what I say."

I ran into the house, and with my two little children I started bareheaded up the road to town. I bade the servants remain. If things grew warm, they had the cellar, and perhaps their presence would save their own goods and mine, should the day go against us. The negroes, in any event, would be safe.

The morning was close and warm, and as we toiled up the dusty road, I regretted the loss of my hat. Presently I met a gentleman driving rapidly from town. It was my neighbor, Mr. Laighton.

He had removed his wife and little girls to a place of safety and was returning for me. He proposed, as we were now out of musket range, that I should rest with the children under the shade of a tree, and he would return to the house to see if he could save something — what did I suggest? I asked that he would bring a change of clothing for the children and my medicine chest.

As we waited for his return, some terrified horses dashed up the road, one with blood flowing from his nostrils. When Mr. Laighton finally returned, he brought news that he had seen my husband, that my boys were safe with him, that all the cooked provisions were spread out for the passing soldiers, and that more were in preparation; also that he had promised to take care of me, and to leave the general free to dispense these things judiciously. John had put the service of silver into the buggy, and Eliza had packed a trunk, for which he was to return. This proved to be the French trunk, in which Eliza sent a change of clothing.

When Mr. Laighton asked where he should go with us, I had no suggestion to make. Few of my friends were in the town, which was filled with refugees. My dear Mrs. Meade or Mr. Charles Campbell would, I was sure, shelter us in an extremity. I decided to drive slowly through the crowded streets, looking out for some sign of lodgings to let. Presently we met a man who directed us to an empty house, and there, dumping the silver service in the front porch, Mr. Laighton left us. About noon I had my first news from the seat of war. John and Alick appeared, the latter leading Rose by a rope. John was to return (he had come to bring me some biscuits and my champagne glasses!), but Alick positively rebelled. Go back! No, *marm*, not if he knew his name was Alick. His mammy had never borned him to be in no battle! And walking off to give Rose a pail of water, he informed her that "You'n me, Rose, is the only folks I see anywhar 'bout here with any sense."

Neighbors soon discovered us; and to my joy I found that Mrs. Gibson, Mrs. Meade, and Mr. Bishop — one of my father's elders — were in their own houses, very near my temporary shelter.

Our father, I learned afterwards, was with the hospital service of his corps, and had been sent to the rear. I sent John back to the farm, strictly ordering that the flag should be cared for. He told me it was safe. He had hidden it under some fence rails in the cellar. As to the battle, he had no news, except that "Marse Roger is giving away everything on the earth. All the presents from the farmer will go in a little while."

In the evening my little boys, envoys from their father, came in with confidential news. The day had gone against us. General Lee was holding the line through our garden. The city would be surrendered at midnight. Their father was giving all our stores of food and all his Confederate money to the private soldiers, a fact which evidently impressed them most of all.

I have told the thrilling story of the ensuing events elsewhere. Having been compelled to repeat much, I must now hasten on, — only briefly recording my husband's recapture, release on parole, and continued recapture every time the occupying troops were replaced by a new division.

The day the Federals entered the town I saw our precious banner borne in triumph past the door. The dear Petersburg women had made it and given it to their brave defender; it was coming back, amid shouts and songs of derision, a captive! As the troops passed they sang, to their battle hymn: —

"John Brown's body is a-mouldering in the ground,
As we go marching on!
Oh, glory hallelujah,
As we go marching on!"

And down the line the tune was caught by advancing soldiers: —

> "Hang Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree,
> As we go marching on.
> Oh, glory hallelujah," etc.

"Ole Uncle Frank's at de bottom of dis business," said Alick; and alas! we had reason to believe that the wily old gentleman — whom we had left hiding in the cellar and imploring "for Gawd's sake, Jinny, bring me a gode o' water" — had purchased favor by revealing the hiding-place of our banner.

Early that morning German soldiers had rushed into our house demanding prisoners. My husband was marched off to headquarters, and the parole written by Mr. Lincoln himself on a visiting-card respected. The morning was filled with exciting incidents. Our English "colonel" came early: "To say good-by, madam! It's a shame! — and all just a question of bread and cheese — nothing but bread and cheese!"

We sat all day in the front room, watching the splendidly equipped host as it marched by on its way to capture Lee. It soon became known that we were there. Within the next few days we had calls from old Washington friends. Among others my husband was visited by Elihu B. Washburne and Senator Henry Wilson, afterward Vice-president of the United States with General Grant. These paid long visits and talked kindly and earnestly of the South.

Mr. Lincoln soon arrived and sent for my husband. But General Pryor excused himself, saying that he was a paroled prisoner, that General Lee was still in the field, and that he could hold no conference with the head of the opposing army.

The splendid troops passed continually. Our hearts sank within us. We had but one hope — that General Lee would join Joseph E. Johnston and find his way to the mountains of Virginia, those ramparts of nature which might afford protection until we could rest and recruit.

Intelligence of the death of President Lincoln reached Petersburg on the 17th of April. As he had been with us but a few days before, manifestly in perfect health and in all the glow and gladness of the triumph of the Federal arms, the community was unspeakably shocked by the catastrophe. That he fell by the hand of an assassin, and that the deed was done by a Confederate and avowedly in the interest of the Confederate cause, were circumstances which distressed us with an apprehension that the entire South would be held responsible for the atrocious occurrence. The day after the tragic news reached us, the people of Petersburg in public meeting adopted resolutions framed by General Pryor, deploring the President's death and denouncing his assassination, — resolutions which gave expression to the earnest and universal sentiment of Virginia. I question if, in any quarter of the country, the virtues of Abraham Lincoln — as exhibited in his spirit of forgiveness and forbearance — are more revered than in the very section which was the battle-ground of the fight for independence of his rule. It is certainly my husband's conviction that had he lived, the South would never have suffered the shame and sorrow of the carpet-bag régime.

CHAPTER XXV

MY condition during the military occupation of Petersburg was extremely unpleasant. I was alone with my children when General Sheridan demanded my house for an adjutant's office. Such alarming rumors had reached us of outrages committed by marauding parties in the neighboring counties that my husband had obtained an extension of his parole to visit his sisters in Nottoway County. His first information of them was from finding their garments in a wagon driven by German soldiers, who, challenged by the barrel of a pistol, made good their escape, leaving their plunder behind them. The fate of his sisters was not discovered for some time. They had found means to hide when the thieves appeared.

General Sheridan, meanwhile, kept me prisoner in two rooms for ten days, and very trying was the experience of those days. He called to "make his respects" to me the day he left, and although I received him courteously he was fully aware that I appreciated the indignity he had put upon me and the record he had made before I met him. He thanked me for the patience with which I had endured the ceaseless noise, tramping, and confusion, night and day, of the adjutant's office, and apologized for the policy he had adopted all through the war.

"It was the best thing to do," he informed me. "The only way to stamp out this rebellion was to handle it without gloves."

I made no answer. "The mailed hand might crush the women and babes," I thought, "but never, never kill the spirit!"

However, they departed at last — leaving me a huge gas-bill to pay and a house polluted with dirt and dust. My husband, still a paroled prisoner, at the end of his leave of absence returned to me and reported to the authorities.

We had made the acquaintance of General Warren, who had been superseded by Sheridan and was now without a command. We grew very fond of him. He spent many hours with us. Tactful, sympathetic, and kind, he never grieved or offended us. One evening he silently took his seat. Presently he said: —

"I have news which will be painful to you. It hurts me to tell you, but I think you had rather hear it from me than from a stranger — General Lee has surrendered."

It was an awful blow to us. All was over. All the suffering, bloodshed, death — all for nothing!

General Johnston's army was surrendered to General Sherman in North Carolina on April 26. The banner which had led the armies of the South through fire and blood to victory, to defeat, in times of starvation, cold, and friendlessness; the banner that many a husband and lover had waved aloft on a forlorn hope until it fell from his lifeless hands; the banner found under the dying boy at Gettysburg, who had smilingly refused assistance lest it be discovered, — the banner of a thousand histories was furled forever, with none so poor to do it reverence.

My dear general was not free until Johnston surrendered. His flag was still in the field, but he was allowed to go to Richmond, twenty miles away, to seek work of some kind to meet our present necessities. My servants came in from Cottage Farm, and every one begged to remain and serve me "for the good" I had "already done them," but this, of course, I could not permit. My faithful John protested passionately against accepting his freedom, but I was firm in demanding he should return to his father in Norfolk. He had earned five dollars in United States money; I had five more which my little boys had gained in a small cigar speculation. This I gave him.

"Now don't let me see you here to-morrow, John. Write to me from Norfolk."

The next morning he was gone, and I had a grateful letter from his old father, who expressed, however, some anxiety about his "army habits."

We had soon occasion to regret the absence of the protecting soldiers. Almost immediately a tall, lantern-jawed young fellow with a musket on his shoulder marched in. I was alone, and he walked up to me with a threatening aspect.

"What do you want here?" I demanded.

"I want whiskey — d'ye hear? *Whiskey!*"

"You'll not get it!"

"Wall, I rayther guess you'll have to scare it up! I'll search the house."

"Search away," I blithely requested him. "Search away, and I'll call the provost guard to help you!"

He turned and marched out. At the door he sent me a Parthian arrow.

"Wall! You've got a damned tongue in yer head ef you ain't got no whiskey."

I repeat this story because my husband has always considered it a good one — too good to be forgotten!

The time now came when I must draw rations for my family. I could not do this by proxy. I was required to present my request in person. As I walked through the streets in early morning, I thought I had never known a lovelier day. How could nature spread her canopy of blossoming magnolia and locust as if nothing had happened? How could the vine over the doorway of my old home load itself with snowy roses, how could the birds sing, how could the sun rise, as if such things as these could ever again gladden our broken hearts?

My dear little sons understood they were to escort me everywhere, so we presented ourselves together at the desk of the government official and announced our errand.

"Have you taken the oath of allegiance, madam?" inquired that gentleman.

"No, sir." I was quite prepared to take the oath.

The young officer looked at me seriously for a moment, and said, as he wrote out the order: —

"Neither will I require it of you, madam!"

I was in better spirits after this pleasant incident, and calling to Alick, I bade him arm himself with the largest basket he could find and take my order to the commissary.

"We are going to have all sorts of good things," I told him, "fresh meat, fruit, vegetables, and everything."

When the boy returned, he presented a drooping figure and a woebegone face. My first unworthy suspicion suggested his possible confiscation of my stores for drink, — for which my poor Alick had a weakness, — but he soon explained.

"I buried that ole stinkin' fish! I wouldn't bring it in your presence. An' here's the meal they give me."

Hairy caterpillars were jumping through the meal! I turned to my table and wrote: —

> "Is the commanding general aware of the nature of the ration issued this day to the destitute women of Petersburg?
>
> [Signing myself] "MRS. ROGER A. PRYOR."

This I gave to Alick, with instructions to present it, with the meal, to General Hartsuff.

Alick returned with no answer; but in a few minutes a tall orderly stood before me, touched his cap, and handed me a note.

> "Major-General Hartsuff is sorry he cannot make *right* all that seems so wrong. He sends the enclosed. Some day General Pryor will repay.
>
> "GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,
> "Major-General Commanding."

The note contained an official slip of paper: —

"The Quartermaster and Commissary of the Army of the Potomac are hereby ordered to furnish Mrs. Roger A. Pryor with all she may demand or require, charging the same to the private account of

"GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,
"Major-General Commanding."

Without the briefest deliberation I wrote and returned the following reply: —

"Mrs. Roger A. Pryor is not insensible to the generous offer of Major-General Hartsuff, but *he ought to have known* that the ration allowed the destitute women of Petersburg must be enough for

"MRS. ROGER A. PRYOR."

As I sat alone, revolving various schemes for our sustenance, — the selling of the precious testimonial service (given by the democracy of Virginia after my husband's noble fight against "Know-nothingism"), the possibility of finding occupation for myself, — the jingling of chain harness at the door arrested my attention. There stood a handsome equipage, from which a very fine lady indeed was alighting. She bustled in with her lace-edged handkerchief to her eyes, and announced herself as Mrs. Hartsuff. She was superbly gowned in violet silk and lace, with a tiny *fanchon* bonnet tied beneath an enormous cushion of hair behind, the first of the fashionable *chignons* I had seen, — an arrangement called a "waterfall," an exaggeration of the plethoric, distended "bun" of the Englishwoman of a few years ago.

I found myself, all at once, conscious that I must, in this lady's eyes, resemble nothing so much as the wooden Mrs. Noah, who presides over the animals in the children's "Noah's arks." Enormous hoops were then in fashion. I had long since been abandoned by mine, and never been able to get my own consent to borrow, as others did, from a friendly grape-vine. My gown was of chocolate-colored calico with white spots. My hair! I had torn it out by the roots when I was delirious at the time of the fierce battle of Port Walthall (six miles from Petersburg), which I had *heard*, my senses being quickened by fever.

Mrs. Hartsuff began hurriedly: "Oh, my dear lady, we are in such distress at headquarters! George is in despair! You won't let him help you! Whatever is he to do?"

"I really am grateful to the general," I assured her; "but you see there is no reason he should do more for me than for others."

"Oh, but there *is* reason. You have suffered more than the rest. You have been driven from your home! Your house has been sacked. George knows all about you. I have brought a basket for you — tea, coffee, sugar, crackers."

"I cannot accept it, I am sorry."

"But what are you going to do? Are you going to starve?"

"Very likely," I said, "but somehow I shall not very much mind!"

"Oh, this is too utterly, utterly dreadful!" said the lady as she left the room.

The next day the ration was changed. Fresh meat, coffee, sugar, and canned vegetables were issued to all the women of Petersburg. The first morning they were received I met the wife of General Weisiger trudging along with a basket. "Going for your rations?" I asked her. "*No* indeed! I'm going, with the only five dollars I have in the world, to the sutler's! I shall buy, as far as it goes, currants, citron, raisins, sugar, butter, eggs, brandy, spice —"

"Mercy! Are you to open a grocery?"

"Not a bit of it" — solemnly — "I'm going to make a *fruit cake!*"

Less, one might think, should have contented a starving woman! The little incident is characteristic of the Southern woman's temperament. She can lie as patiently as another under the heel of a hard fate, but the moment the heel is lifted she is ready for a festival.

All the citizens who had been driven away now began to return — among them the owners of the house I was occupying, and I was compelled to return to Cottage Farm. General Hartsuff, to whom I applied for a guard, said at once: —

"It is impossible for you to go to Cottage Farm; there are fifty or more negroes on the place. You cannot live there."

"I must! It is my only shelter."

"Well, then, I'll allow you a guard, and Mrs. Hartsuff had better take you out herself, that is, if you can condescend to accept as much."

I was not aware that Mrs. Hartsuff had entered and stood behind me.

"And I think, George," she said, "you ought to give Mrs. Pryor a horse and cart in place of her own that were stolen." Before my conscience could strengthen itself to protest that I had not owned a horse and cart, the general exclaimed: "All right, all right! Madam, you will find the guard at your door when you arrive. You go this evening? All right — good morning."

Mrs. Hartsuff duly appeared in the late afternoon with an ambulance and four horses, and we departed in fine style. She was very cheery and agreeable, and made me promise to let her come often to see me. As we were galloping along in state, we passed a line of weary-looking dusty Confederate soldiers, limping along, on their way to their homes. They stood aside to let us pass. I was cut to the heart at the spectacle. Here was I, accepting the handsome equipage of the invading commander — I, who had done nothing, going on to my comfortable home; while they, poor fellows, who had borne long years of battle and starvation, were mournfully returning on foot, to find, perhaps, no home to shelter them. "Never again," I said to myself, "shall this happen! If I cannot help, I can at least suffer with them."

But when I reached Cottage Farm, I found a home that no soldier, however forlorn, could have envied me. A scene of desolation met my eyes. The earth was ploughed and trampled, the grass and flowers were gone, the carcasses of six dead cows lay in the yard, and filth unspeakable had gathered in the corners of the house. The evening air was heavy with the odor of decaying flesh. As the front door opened, millions of flies swarmed forth.

"If this were I," said Mrs. Hartsuff, as she gathered her skirts as closely around her as her hoops would permit, "I should fall across this threshold and die."

"I shall not fall," I said proudly; "I shall stand in my lot."

Within was dirt and desolation. Pieces of fat pork lay on the floors, molasses trickled from the library shelves, where bottles lay uncorked. Filthy, malodorous tin cans were scattered on the floors. Nothing, not even a tin dipper to drink out of the well, was left in the house, except one chair out of which the bottom had been cut and one bedstead fastened together with bayonets. Picture frames were piled against the wall. I eagerly examined them. Every one was empty. One family portrait of an old lady was hanging on the wall with a sabre cut across her face.

To my great joy Aunt Jinny appeared, full of sympathy and resource. She gathered us into her kitchen while she swept the cleanest room for us and spread quilts upon the floor. Later in the evening an ambulance from Mrs. Hartsuff drove up. She had sent me a tin box of bread and butter sandwiches, some tea, an army cot, and army bedding.

The guard, a great tall fellow, came to me for orders. I felt nervous at his presence and wished I had not brought him. I directed him to watch all night at the road side of the house, while I would sit up and keep watch in the opposite direction. The children soon slept upon the floor.

As the night wore on, I grew extremely anxious about the strange negroes. Aunt Jinny thought there were not more than fifty. They had filled every outhouse except the kitchen. Suppose they should overpower the guard and murder us all!

Everything was quiet. I had not the least disposition to sleep — thinking, thinking of all the old woman had told me: of the sacking of the house, of the digging of the cellar in search of treasure, of the torch that had twice been applied to the house and twice withdrawn because some officer wanted the shaded dwelling for a temporary lodging. Presently I was startled by a shrill scream from the kitchen, a door opened suddenly and shut, and a voice cried: "Thank Gawd! Thank Gawd A'mighty!" Then all was still.

Was this a signal? I held my breath and listened, then softly rose, closed the shutters and fastened them, crept to the door, and bolted it inside. I might defend my children till the guard could come.

Evidently he had not heard! He was probably sleeping the sleep of an untroubled conscience on the bench in the front porch. And with untroubled consciences my children were sleeping. It was so dark in the room I could not see their faces, but I could touch them, and push the wet locks from their brows, as they lay in the close and heated atmosphere.

I resumed my watch at the window, pressing my face close to the slats of the shutters. A pale half-moon hung low in the sky, turning its averted face from a suffering world. At a little distance I could see the freshly made soldier's grave which Alick had discovered and reported. A heavy rain had fallen in the first hours of the night, and a stiff arm and hand now protruded from the shallow grave. To-morrow I would reverently cover the appealing arm, be it clad in blue or in gray, and would mark the spot. Now, as I sat with my fascinated gaze upon it, I thought of the tens of thousands, of the hundreds of thousands of upturned faces beneath the green sod of old Virginia. Strong in early manhood, grave, high-spirited men of genius, men whom their country had educated for her own defence in time of peril, — they had died because that country could devise in her wisdom no better means of settling a family quarrel than the wholesale slaughter of her sons by the sword. And now? "Not until the heavens be no more shall they awake nor be raised out of their sleep."

And then, as I sorrowed for their early death in loneliness and anguish, I remembered the white-robed souls beneath the altar of God, — the souls that had "come out of great tribulation," and *because* they had thus suffered "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; . . . and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

And then, as the pale, distressful moon sank behind the trees, and the red dawn streamed up from the east, the Angel of Hope, who had "spread her white wings and sped her away" for a little season, returned. And Hope held by the hand an angel stronger than she, who bore to me a message: "In the world ye have tribulations; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The sun was rising when I saw my good old friend emerge from her kitchen, and I opened the shutters to greet her. She had brought me a cup of delicious coffee, and was much distressed because I had not slept. Had I heard anything?

"'Course I know you was bleeged to hear," said Aunt Jinny, as she bustled over the children. "That was Sis' Winny! She got happy in the middle of the night, an' Gawd knows what she would have done if Frank hadn't ketched hold of her and pulled her back in the kitchen! Frank an' me is pretty nigh outdone an' discouraged 'bout Sis' Winny. She prays constant all day; but Gawd A'mighty don't count on being bothered all night. Ain't He 'ranged for us all to sleep, an' let Him have a little peace? Sis' Winny must keep her happiness to herself, when folks is trying to git some res'."

The guard now came to my window to say he "guessed" he'd "have to put on some more harness. Them blamed niggers refused to leave. They might change their minds when they saw the pistols."

"Oh, you wouldn't shoot, would you?" I said in great distress. "Call them all to the back door and let me speak with them." I found myself in the presence of some seventy-five negroes, men, women, and children, all with upturned faces, keenly interested in what I should say to them.

I talked to them kindly and explained my presence, asking them to remain, if they would help clean the yard, with the result that Abram and Beverly, two old men who had known my general in his boyhood, pledged themselves to stay with me on the terms I suggested.

To my great joy, my dear husband returned from Richmond. There was no hope there for lucrative occupation. He had no profession. He had forgotten all the little law he had learned at the university. He had been an editor, diplomat, politician, and soldier, and distinguished himself in all four. These were now closed to him forever! There seemed to be no room for a rebel in all the world.

CHAPTER XXVI

WE found it almost impossible to take up our lives again. All the cords binding us to the past were severed, beyond the hope of reunion. We sat silently looking out on a landscape marked here and there by chimneys standing sentinel over blackened heaps, where our neighbors had made happy homes. Only one remained, Mr. Green's, beyond a little ravine across the road.

We had, fortunately, no inclination to read. A few books had been saved, only those for which we had little use. A soldier walked in one day with a handsome volume which Jefferson Davis, after inscribing his name in it, had presented to the general. The soldier calmly requested the former owner to be kind enough to add to the value of the volume by writing beneath the inscription his own autograph, and his request granted, walked off with it under his arm. "He has been at some trouble," said my husband, "and he had as well be happy if I cannot!"

As the various brigades moved away from our neighborhood, a few plain articles of furniture that had been taken from the house were restored to us, but nothing handsome or valuable, no books nor pictures,—just a few chairs and tables. I had furnished an itemized list of all the articles we had lost, with only this result.

We had news after a while of our blooded mare, Lady Jane. A letter enclosing her photograph came from a New England officer: —

"To Mr. Pryor,

"*Dear Sir:* A very fine mare belonging to you came into my camp near Richmond and is now with me. It would add much to her value if I could get her pedigree. Kindly send it at your earliest convenience, and oblige,

"Yours truly,

"—— ——.

"P.S. The mare is in good health, as you will doubtless be glad to know."

Disposed as my general was to be amiable, this was a little too much! The pedigree was not sent, but later the amiable owner of Lady Jane sent her photograph. Also his own — on her back.

A great number of tourists soon began to pass our house on their way to visit the localities near us, now become historic. They frequently called upon us, claiming some common acquaintance. We could not but resent this. Their sympathetic attitude offended us, sore and proud as we were.

We were perfectly aware that they wished to see *us*, and not to gain, as they affected, information about the historic localities on the farm. Still less did they desire ignobly to triumph over us. A boy, when he tears off the wings of a fly, is much interested in observing its actions, not that he is cruel — far from it! He is only curious to see how the creature will behave under very disadvantageous circumstances.

One day a clergyman called, with a card of introduction from Mrs. Hartsuff, who had, I imagine, small discernment as regards clergymen. This one was a smug little man, sleek, unctuous, and trim, with Pecksniffian self-esteem oozing out of every pore of his face.

"Well, madam," he commenced, "I trust I find you lying meekly under the chastening rod of the Lord. I trust you can say 'it is good I was afflicted.'"

Having no suitable answer just ready, I received his pious exhortation in silence. One can always safely do this with a clergyman.

"There are seasons," continued the good man, "when chastisement must be meted out to the transgressor; but if borne in the right spirit, the rod may blossom with blessings in the end."

A little more of the same nature wrung from me the query, "Are there none on the other side who need the rod?"

"Oh — well, now — my dear lady! You must consider! You were in the wrong in this unhappy contest, or, I should say, this most righteous war."

"*Væ victis!*" I exclaimed. "Our homes were invaded. We are on our own soil!"

My reverend brother grew red in the face. Rising and bowing himself out, he sent me a Parthian arrow: —

> "No thief e'er felt the halter draw
> With good opinion of the law."

Fortunately my general was absent at the moment. Like the Douglas, he had endured much, but —

> "Last and worst, to spirit proud
> To bear the pity of the crowd" —

this was more than he could endure.

The suggestive odors within doors could never be stifled or cleansed away. Not before October could I get my consent to eat a morsel in the house. I took my meals under the trees, unless driven by the rains to the shelter of the porch. I suffered terribly for want of occupation. I had no household to manage, no garments to mend or make. My little Lucy could not bear the sun, and she sat quietly beside me all day. I could have made a sun-bonnet for her, but I had no fabric, no thimble, needles, thread, or scissors. Finally I discovered in the pocket of one of my Washington coats my silver card-case with Trinity Church on one side and the Capitol at Washington on the other, — objects I had now no right to hold dear. I made Alick drive me in my little farm cart to the sutler's and effected an exchange for a small straw "Shaker" bonnet which I am sure could have been purchased for less than one dollar. Protected with this, the little girl found a play-house under the trees. A good old friend, Mr. Kemp, invited the boys to accompany him upon relic-hunting expeditions to the narrow plain which had divided the opposing lines on that fateful April morning just three months before. Ropes were fastened around extinct shells, and they were hauled in, to stand sentinel at the door. The shells were short cylinders, with one pointed end like a candle before it is lighted. Numbers of minie balls were dug out of the sand. One day Mr. Kemp brought in a great curiosity — two bullets welded together, having been shot from opposing rifles.

The sultry days were begun and rounded by hours of listless endurance followed by troubled sleep. A bag of army "hard-tack" stood in a corner, so the children were never hungry. Presently they, too, sat around us, too listless to play or talk. A great army of large, light brown Norway rats now overran the farm. They would walk to the corner before our eyes and help themselves to the army ration. We never moved a finger to drive them away. After a while Alick appeared with an enormous black-and-white cat.

"Dis is jest a lettle mo'n I can stand," said Alick. "De Yankees has stole ev'rything, and dug up de whole face o' de yearth — and de Jews comes all de time and pizens de well, droppin' down chains an' grapplin'-irons to see ef we-all has hid silver — but I ain' obleedged to stan' sassyness fum dese outlandish rats."

Alick had to surrender. The very first night after the arrival of his valiant cat there was a scuffle in the room where the crackers were kept, a chair was overturned, and a flying cat burst through the hall, pursued by three or four huge rats. The cat took refuge in a tree, and stealthily descending at an opportune moment, stole away and left the field to the enemy.

Of course there could be but one result from this life. Malaria had hung over us for weeks, and now one after another of the children lay down upon the "pallets" on the floor, ill with fever. Then I succumbed and was violently ill. Our only nurse was my dear general; and not in all the years when he never shirked a duty, nor lost a march, nor rode on his own horse when his men toiled on foot or if one failed by the way, nor ever lost one of the battles in which he personally led them, — not in all those trying times was he nobler, grander than in his long and lonely vigils beside his sick family. And most nobly did the aged negress, my blessed Aunt Jinny, stand by us. My one fevered vision was of an ebony idol.

General and Mrs. Hartsuff were terribly afraid of the Southern fevers, but sent us sympathetic messages from the gate. But as soon as I could receive him, Captain Gregory, the commissary general, sought an interview with me. General Hartsuff had sent him to say that it was absolutely necessary for General Pryor to leave Virginia. He had never been pardoned. There were men in power who constantly hinted at punishment and retribution. He had been approached by General Hartsuff and vehemently refused to leave his family.

"Where, oh, where could he go?" I pleaded. "He does think sometimes of New Orleans."

"Madam," said Captain Gregory, "there is a future before your husband. New York is the place for him."

"He will never, never consent to go there," I said.

"Well, then, we must use a little diplomacy. Send him by sea to shake off his chills. Mark my words—as soon as he registers in New York, friends will gather around him. Only *send* him—and speedily. I come from General Hartsuff."

My Theo was listening to this conversation, and when Captain Gregory left, he implored me to obey him. Without consulting his father the old horse General Hartsuff had given me was hitched to the little cart, and we set forth to find some broker who would lend us a small sum, receiving my watch and diamond ring as pledges for repayment.

After several failures we found an obliging banker who lent me, upon my proposed security, three hundred dollars. As I left his office my hand instinctively sought my little watch to learn the hour. It was gone!—pledged to send my general to New York. I bought some quinine and ordered my husband's tailor to make without delay a suit of clothes to replace the threadbare uniform of Confederate gray. It was difficult to persuade the wearer to accept the proposition — which was only for the sea voyage in order to break the chills that shook him so relentlessly every third day. Nothing was farther from my thought or wishes than a permanent residence in New York.

CHAPTER XXVII

IT was supposed that my husband would be absent only a week. The following letter from New York explains his delay: —

"I had intended leaving here yesterday, but our friend, General Warren, invited me for dinner Sunday. I find him in a handsome house in a fashionable quarter of the city. Mrs. Warren inquired kindly about you. She has two charming sisters of our Gordon's age.

"What will you think when I tell you that several gentlemen suggest to me to settle here? Dare I 'then, to beard the lion in his den — the Douglas in his hall!' Not in his 'hall,' certainly, unless I am very specially invited by him, but I might in time wrestle with him, in a court-room. I have a mind to try it. 'The world is all before us where to choose.' I shouldn't like the Douglas to find out I have forgotten all the law I ever knew. Neither would I like my good old Professor Minor (if he reads the N. Y. reports) to make a similar discovery."

Close upon this letter followed another.

"I am not yet determined when to return. I was to leave this morning, but Mr. Ben Wood of the *News* has requested me to remain a day or two that he might have a talk with me. What this means, I am not sure. I conjecture he will propose some connection with his paper. By the last of the week you may expect me with you."

The last of the week found him still in New York. Early in October he wrote: —

"I have accepted Mr. Wood's proposition *for the present.* The only difficulty I see is the fact that they refuse me a pardon. If they learn that I am writing for the *News*, they may send me to keep company with John Mitchell. I understand that charges are constantly made against me in Washington. Whatever they are, they are false, trumped up to serve some sinister purpose. Yet I am resolved not to degrade myself by any abject submission. I have never solicited 'pardon,' and I mean to approach them with no further overture.

"I am so glad you liked the box. Don't scold me for extravagance. You have suffered long enough for the mere decencies of life. I am going to work like a beaver and with no other purpose now than to earn a living for my dear wife and children. Ambition! The ambition of my life is to have my darlings settled in comfort. May God assist me in the endeavor!

"My room is at 47 West 12th Street. There you must send my winter clothes — and we must try, whatever is left undone, to send the boys to school."

But after a week or two he became discouraged at the cost of living in New York, and wavered again.

"I feel I cannot bear a long separation from my dear family — my darling little ones. And yet how can I maintain them here? Is it not a cruel fortune which tears us asunder when our delight in each other is about the only source of happiness left us in this world? I shall lose, in this hopeless grind, all the elastic energy of my mind. I cannot live without you! Do you advise me to continue my connection with the *News?* Twenty-five dollars a week is a pitiful sum, but how can I do better? If I can only procure the comforts of life for my family! That is my only object in life — fame, ambition, office, all these things I have renounced forever. Is it not hard that one should be baffled in so reasonable an endeavor? I can leave here at any moment, my connection with the paper being that of a mere contributor. I am not at all responsible for its course, but only for my own articles."

Early in December my husband wrote me the following letter: —

"I am still the victim of ague and fever — the worst I ever suffered. The chill comes on every alternate day, and during its continuance — about two hours — I am tortured with the most agonizing nausea, followed by fever. Thus I spend two days in every week. Dr. Whitehead attends me and expects to relieve me, but meanwhile it is very annoying to be so stricken just as one enters the fight.

"For I *have* entered the fight! The die is cast — and here I mean to remain, 'sink or swim, survive or perish.' This is the way it has all come about.

"Sitting late one night with Mr. Ben Wood in the *News* office, he turned to me and said rather abruptly, 'General, why don't you practise law? You would make $10,000 a year.' I answered, 'For the best of all possible reasons — I am not a lawyer.' He replied, 'Neither is C, nor T; yet *they* make $10,000 a year.'

"Of course the idea of my ever making so great a sum was too preposterous for a moment's thought. Nevertheless, Mr. Wood pressed the appeal; and being enforced by McMasters of the *Freeman's Journal*, it made an impression on my mind. I said nothing to you about it at the time, because I had, until within the last few weeks, reached no decision in the matter. But just then I received an invitation from Mr. Luke Cozzens for temporary desk room in his office and the use of his library. I have really borrowed books and been studying law in my leisure hours ever since I came to the city, and I now resolved to make application for admittance to the Bar! The application was made by James T. Brady, the most eminent of our forensic orators. I was required to make affidavit of my residence in the State, and some other formal facts, but such was my ignorance of legal procedure that I was unable to draw the affidavit, which Judge Barnard perceiving, he kindly drew the paper for me. Thereupon the Hon. John B. Haskins — my former associate in Congress — was appointed to examine me as to my knowledge of Law. Under his lead we went to a restaurant. When seated he proceeded, with much solemnity of manner, to 'examine' me. He asked me, 'What are the essentials of the negotiability of a note?' This question I was prepared to answer, and did answer to his satisfaction.

" After a 'judicial pause,' he asked gravely, 'What will you take?'

"This also I was fully prepared to answer — and entirely to his satisfaction.

" He asked me no other question. He was apparently satisfied with the good sense of my last answer. We returned to the Court, and he reported in favor of my application!

" Still an insuperable obstacle to my practising was an inability to procure an office, for my desk room at Mr. Cozzens's was not suitable for my new dignity. This difficulty has been removed by the offer of Mr. Hughes (an English 'sympathizer') to allow me the use of one of his two rooms for the nominal price of $1 a month in Tryon Row. Both he and I have learned since that this is considered an undesirable locality — a fact of which we were ignorant, but here I must remain until I can better myself. My room is perfectly bare — a carpetless floor, plain uncovered table, and three chairs — one for myself, and the others for possible clients. Here I have swung out my modest shingle soliciting the patronage of the public.

"I have commenced attending the Courts regularly and have heard the leading lawyers. I am not vain, as you know, but — *I am not afraid of them!* But when, when shall I have a chance? The great difficulty in my way is the prejudice against 'rebels'; and that I am sorry to see is not diminishing. I hope to wear it away after a while if, meantime, I do not starve. It is my last cast — and I am resolved to succeed or perish in the attempt. Several New York papers have spoken of my residence here with kindness and compliment, but a silly sneer in the *Boston Post* — under which I am fool enough to suffer — cut me to the heart, trifling and flippant as it is: 'The Rebel Pryor has opened an office in New York for the practice of the Law, but he has not yet had a *rap.*'— (R. A. P.).

"Look now for uninteresting letters. It will be study, *study*, *study*, ever after this! I am writing now at night, with a languid head. My children — my dear children! How I love them! God bless them!"

He wrote, December 28: —

"My prospects here had brightened a little with the promise of a case that would, in time, have yielded me two hundred dollars, but a friendly priest (and he was wise) persuaded the parties to settle out of Court, and so my hopes were dashed to the ground. But I am retained, provisionally, as counsel for the National Express Company, from which I may make something. My thoughts at Christmas in my lonely office were with my precious household at Cottage Farm. How I regretted my want of money would not permit me to send some holiday presents, but we must bear these privations till happier days. I longed to go to you — but had no money to defray the expense of the trip. Dearest Sara, let us endure these trials with all possible fortitude. If only you can keep happy, I can bear my portion of the burden."

In February he wrote me: —

"To-day I make a reckoning of my earnings since my residence in New York. I was admitted to the Bar about the first of December. I have been 'practising,' then, about two months and a half. Well, my receipts for sundry small services have been $356, and I am retained by an express company. I wonder if this looks as if we are 'out of the woods.' Unhappily I have had to pay a debt incurred when I was in Fort Lafayette, and for which I had provided money, but it was embezzled by a dishonest quartermaster at the Fort. Then the small debts we owed when we left Washington — and which, you remember, the Confederate Government 'confiscated' and for which exacted payment — have simply waited for me to get work, and these I must promptly pay. However, I am hopeful. God grant my anticipations may be realized.

"I have some little money owing to me and some doubtful claims, and the Court and lawyers treat me with marked courtesy. I study intensely and am as diligent as possible in attention to my duties. I mean at least to deserve success — which is the surest way to realize it. Kiss the chicks!

"Devotedly,
"R. A. P.

"P.S. A client interrupts me! Don't be depressed, Sallie! A gleam of light gilds our horizon, which has been dark, God knows, long enough. Next summer we must have our *home*, and won't it be a happy home? God grant it. God bless us all."

Alas, the next letter announced the fading of the "gleam of light" into darkness and disappointment.

"I thought I had two *good* cases this week, but my clients decided not to sue. Oh, how weary I am of this life! But there is no escape, and I must not despond. Stimulate the boys to diligence in their studies. Is Billy still mischievous? And Lucy demure? Ah, Fan! apple of my eye, how I love you! How I long to see you all! The bright, the happy day will soon come, I pray. Heaven only knows how I pine for my family; but my first duty is to feed them, and until that is accomplished I must forego every personal gratification.

"I am convinced the chief obstacle to my success is the prejudice against 'rebels.' That is fearful, and I feel its effects every day. I was lately employed as a referee to report the facts in an application for the discharge of a prisoner by the process of *habeas corpus*. When my name as referee was announced, one of the counsel arose and protested to the Court that he would not appear before a rebel whose hands were yet red with loyal blood. Thereupon, of course, I declined the appointment. Still, I must toil on, nothing disheartened. The memory of the little household at Cottage Farm animates and sustains me in my troubles. May God bless and prosper us!

"Devotedly,
"R. A. P."

My dear aunt had now joined me with my little girls. One night I was awakened by a voice speaking to me under my window. There stood a negro man. "Mr. Green wants you right away, madam," he said. "He thinks he's dying, an' he says he is *obliged* to see you. I brought a note."

The note from a relative of Mr. Green confirmed the man's statement, adding: "Let nothing prevent your coming. George will take care of you."

My aunt felt a little nervous at so strange and peremptory a summons, but at last we decided I must go. She could see me in the moonlight every step of the way, down the path, across the little bridge at the bottom of the ravine, and up the ascent beyond. So I dressed hurriedly and departed.

I found the house in darkness and silence. The lady who had written me took me into her room and whispered her story. Mr. Green was extremely ill and in great distress because he had made no will. The house was full of his relatives, gathered because his death was expected. He wished to leave everything he possessed to his wife and youngest daughter, Nannie. He had provided for the others — given them their portion. He could not secretly summon a lawyer from town. He was miserably anxious, sleepless, and unhappy.

To-night he had found himself alone with this relative who was nursing him, and drawing her down to his pillow, had begged her "Send for Mrs. Pryor — *now* and quick. She will write for me."

I knew him only by sight, and I was, of course, surprised. But I did not hesitate. I was at once introduced into his room, and by the light of a solitary candle burning upon the floor in a corner I dimly discerned the gray head and closed eyes of the sick man. He was sleeping peacefully, and we dared not awaken him. Pen, ink, and paper were given me, and prone upon my elbows and knees in the dim corner, I wrote a will, repeating faithfully the words I had received, beginning: "In the name of Almighty God — Amen — I, William Green," etc.

We then awaited in silence the waking of the sick man. Very gently I told him my errand, and read twice what I had written, asking him again and again, "Are you sure you do not wish to leave anything whatever to your other children?" "*No, no, no!*" he answered. I put my arm beneath him, raised him, and the paper was laid on a pillow before him. He looked around helplessly. His spectacles! We placed them, and with the pen in trembling fingers he signed his name, and uttered the last words he probably ever spoke, — "Three witnesses!" His relative signed, I signed, and the negro nurse signed with her mark.

"Now I'll send you home," said his friend, when we left the room. "No," I said, "I can do nothing clandestine. I must stay and tell his relatives how I come to be here."

Very early they all assembled and I said: "I was sent for by your father last night to write his will. If it should displease any one of you, remember he only used my hand. He understood perfectly what he was doing."

"I am sure it is all right, as far as I am concerned," said one. "I have always known this place was to be left to me."

"I know nothing I can reveal," I assured her.

That day Mr. Green died. His will was admitted to probate and never contested.

Early in February old Abram, the faithful servant in whose care my husband left me, announced that we had reached the end of all our resources at Cottage Farm. Rose, the little cow, had died, the turnips and potatoes Abram had raised were all gone, the two pigs he had reared had fulfilled their destiny long ago, and the government rations had ceased. He "could scuffle along himself, but 'twa'n't no use to pertend" he could "take care of mistis an' the chilluns, not like they ought to be took care of."

"We must not despair, Abram," I said. "We'll feed the children, never fear! I must plan something to help."

"Plannin' ain't no 'count, mistis, less'n you got sump'n to work on. What we-all goin' to do for wood?"

"What you have done all along, I suppose."

"No'm. Dat's onpossible. We done burn up Fort Gregg an' Battery 45. Der ain' no mo' fortifications on de place as I knows of."

"Fortifications!" I exclaimed. "Why, Abram! you surely haven't been burning the fortifications!"

"Hit's des like I tell you, mistis. De las' stick's on yo' woodpile now."

"Well, Abram," I said gravely, "if we have destroyed our fortifications — burned our bridges — the time has come to change our base. We will move into town."

Of course, without food or fuel, and without Abram, we could not live in the country. The fields were a desolate waste, with no fences to protect a possible crop or to keep cattle within bounds. Abram saw no hope from cultivation — nothing to "work on." He had been a refugee from a lower plantation, and he was now inclined to put out his children to service, and return in his old age to his old home and to his old master, who longed to welcome him. He was a grand old man. I doubt not he has a warm place in the bosom of that other Abram the faithful, but no whit more faithful than he.

The afternoon before our departure from Cottage Farm, the weather was so deliciously balmy that I walked over the garden and grounds, thinking of the great drama that had been enacted on this spot. The spring comes early in the lower counties of Virginia. Already the grass was springing, and on the trees around the well which had so often refreshed General Lee, tender young leaves were trembling. Spring had come to touch all scars with her gentle finger-tips. Over all the battle-torn ground, over the grave of the young soldier who had lain so long under my window, over the track ploughed by shot and shell, she had spread a delicate bloom like a smile on the lips of the dead.

Much of my last night at Cottage Farm was spent at the window from which I had watched on that anxious night of my first home-coming. The home had been polluted, sacked, desecrated — and yet I was leaving it with regret. Many a hard battle with illness, with want, with despair, had been fought within those walls. It seemed like a long, dark night in which neither sun nor moon nor stars had appeared; during which we had simply endured, watching ourselves the while, jealous lest the natural rebound of youthful hope and spirit should surprise us, and dishonor those who had suffered and bled and died for our sakes.

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN March my husband wrote a letter of warm congratulation upon my success in gathering all our children together, and sent me a sum to be used in sending them to school. That I might aid my husband to mend our fortunes, I persuaded seven of my neighbors' children to take music lessons from me. The boys were entered to Mr. Gordon McCabe—the accomplished gentleman and scholar so well known and so popular in England as well as at home. My daughter Gordon entered an excellent school of which Professor Davis was principal. The older children had been taught by the Rev. William Hoge, who had been pastor of the Brick Church on Fifth Avenue, New York. They were well instructed in Greek, Latin, and mathematics, and eagerly embraced their new opportunities. Before we left Virginia Gordon graduated in her school, and the boys took honors of their accomplished preceptor,—Theo winning the first prize—the Pegram prize, ordained to commemorate Mr. McCabe's colonel, "who died with all his wounds in front." The children's father longed all the more—were that possible—for his home. He writes March 15:—

"Beg Gordon to apply herself diligently to my books—or what is left of them. She must read Wilson's 'Essay on Burns,' Macaulay's essays — Jeffrey, Wilson, and Sydney

Smith. She must study Russell's 'Modern Europe,' and must read Pope, Cowper, and other poets. I wish her to be the most brilliant girl of the day. These accomplishments may stand her in better stead than others of mere display. McCabe will push the boys.

"I know I have written you despondent letters, but I do not despair! I am only depressed by my physical weakness and by my very great difficulties, *but here I mean to stay!* It is my last cast in the game of life, and if I fail now, all is lost. I am writing again for the *News*. I need the money to support us. The Law is so slow — so uncertain that I almost despair. If I had a little farm in the country and barely enough for existence, I would be content, *provided* I could have my family and the enjoyment of their society. You can have no idea how miserable is my life here. It is enough to make me crazy. I can hardly endure it. I do trust your Christian fortitude enables you to bear our misfortunes better than I can. You have the children! Roger has written me a sweet letter, for which I thank him. I trust they all care a little for me! Poor papa, so lonely and sad without his home! Kiss them all for me. I love them more than all the world."

The hour before the dawn is always, we are told, a dark hour. This was a dark hour indeed, but the dawn was near. Alas, there were yet many nights of darkness, many mornings of fitful dawning, before the sun rose clearly on better days! My husband's sensitive spirit responded as quickly to the humor of a situation as to pathos and tragedy. Very soon after the mournful letter I received the following: —

"'The Rebel Pryor' has had 'a *rap*' at last — a rap with no uncertain significance. I have had a call from a *bona fide* client!

"Quite unexpectedly this morning a stalwart and evidently brusque person entered, and accosting me asked, 'Is your name Pryor?' I had to acknowledge the damaging fact! 'Well,' he said, 'my name is "France." Ben Wood has sent me to you to argue a case I have in Court. Now I have as many lawsuits as any man in the United States, and experience has taught me never to retain a lawyer until we have agreed upon all I am to pay for his services.'

"To this I assented, but added that as I did not know what his case might be, I could not indicate any terms of employment.

"He replied, 'I live in Baltimore. I am at the head of all the Lottery business in the United States. My business has failed, and I'm trying to get discharge under your Two Thirds Act.' Now I had never heard of the Two Thirds Act, and had no notion what he meant, but this fact, you may be sure, I did not communicate to my intending client. At this point I made a bad break. I said, 'Mr. France, you know I have been practising in New York a very short time, and of course I am quite ignorant of the rate of charges here.' Instantly it occurred to me that he would draw an inference not only of my ignorance of fees, but of the law itself. Fortunately the reflection seemed to escape him. My object was, of course, to avoid designating the amount of the fee myself. I wanted to ask him fifty dollars, but I had a dreadful fear that the proposition would drive him out of the office, and I would not get even twenty-five, — which I would gladly have accepted. I begged him to name the fee, with the assurance of whatever it might be I would accept it.

"He answered, 'I never *prize*' (this he pronounced *price*) 'any man's labor.' Still I persisted in the endeavor to throw the burden of the offer upon him. He became angered, and fumed a bit, but finally said: —

"'Little Owen' (a very able English solicitor who has settled in New York in the practice of Bankruptcy and Insolvency proceedings) — 'Little Owen has served all the citations and prepared all the other necessary papers, and all you will have to do will be to argue the question of my discharge on the return day of the motion, three weeks hence. Now — I will make with you the same agreement that I have made with Mr. Owen — which is five hundred dollars cash, and one thousand if you procure my application.'

" With the utmost dignity and appearance of reluctance I said, ' Mr. France, you have my word that I would accept any offer you might make, and of course I will agree to this sum, however inadequate the compensation may be.' Going down into his pockets he drew out five hundred dollars in notes, which he gave me, and which I am sending you through Bob McIlwane. Let me know when you receive it. I mean to win the thousand! Expect no more long letters! Between this hour and the day of argument I shall think of, dream of, no subject on earth but the Two Thirds Act!"

He argued the motion and won it. The court and lawyers treated him kindly, and the judge said, " It is a great privilege to hear a good argument from an able lawyer!" He was soon employed in other cases. His letters now exhibited the most hopeful temper. " I am overwhelmed," he wrote me, " with business for the Southern Express Company. It keeps me employed night and day, but so far has yielded me no money. I hope, however, eventually to get a fee that shall compensate me for all my labor, so I am encouraged to work on. I am sure of success! I feel it in me. Let us crowd all sail, and not languish in despair. Did you ever know any one who lived honestly, worked hard, and exerted competent talent to fail in any enterprise of life? I think we have competent ability; as for the rest I am certain; my health is perfect. The debility which so oppressed me is succeeded by perfect health and vigor."

And all because of the one-thousand-dollar fee (half of which he already owed) from Mr. France, the lottery dealer! Wherever he is, — and I trust he lives to read these words, — I have for him, now and always, my grateful blessing.

As for the Express Company, — the brilliant hopes from that quarter melted as does the baseless fabric of a dream. The company became hopelessly insolvent, and for the promised fee of three thousand dollars paid its hard-worked counsel nothing.

The winter of 1866–1867 was marked with fluctuating hopes and disappointments. The great labor in the interests of the Express Company had yielded nothing.

"The Express Company is insolvent beyond redemption [my husband wrote me]. This involves a loss to me of $3000 — and again delays indefinitely the reunion with my family here. I am not dismayed, however, *au contraire!* My present impulse is to retrieve the loss by extraordinary exertions. *Work*, *work*, *work*, is my duty and destiny; your welfare the goal that beckons me on. I contemplate nothing else — I desire nothing else. I have been unanimously elected a member of the Manhattan Club, — an association for the purpose of social enjoyment, — but of course the expense is a formidable bar to me. I sometimes attend as Mr. Schell's guest, and I am received with great kindness.

"I have met Miss Augusta Evans, the authoress, and I am impressed with the goodness of her heart and her devotion to learning. Her appearance is extremely pleasing — brown hair, the color of yours — fair complexion — blue eyes (I think), a fine brow and well-developed head, a figure slight and graceful, and of your height. The expression of her countenance is serious, almost sad, though it lights up with the animation of talk. She is good, modest, sincere, pious. Her devotion to the 'lost cause' is fanatical. I think her mind is irregularly developed, but she has infinite ambition and will improve.

"I have also had the great pleasure of seeing Ristori and of being presented to her behind the scenes. Her acting is a revelation. I could not understand one word of her language, but her voice, her exquisite articulation, her expressive countenance and gestures, told the story eloquently to my uninstructed eyes and ears. How I longed for you! All pleasure must be, in your absence, poisoned for me.

"I have agreed to accept the defence of an unhappy Episcopal minister who was arrested in an omnibus for picking a lady's pocket! He was about to leave the stage when a voice arrested him: 'Stop that man! He has stolen my pocket-book.' The pocket-book was found upon him. It is by no means impossible that the thief may have dropped it in my client's pocket. So although he is miserably poor and can pay me nothing for my trouble, my sympathies are enlisted, and I shall do my best for him. Think of it! An Episcopal minister!"

Later: —

"My wretched client is bailed at last. I am more and more persuaded of his innocence, but whether I can make it appear in the trial is another thing. The evidence is almost conclusive against him. The case is so bad I can hardly expect the judge to discharge him. I can acquit him, however, before a jury."

Two months later he wrote: —

"I have refused to be further connected in the case of the Episcopal minister, for reasons which it is not proper I should disclose even to you. He is now committed to the protecting care of a lawyer whose defence will be insanity!

"Some of the papers made haste to announce that 'the Rebel Pryor has been superseded in the criminal case of —— by other lawyers,' and it was suspected the publication had emanated from the prisoner's friends to escape an imaginary prejudice against a 'Rebel' advocate. The truth is, I learned facts from my client which made me withdraw from the case — facts in writing. I indignantly refused any further connection with ——. His friends wrote me imploring me to stand by him, and it is suspected that when they found me obstinate, *they* instigated the newspaper assertion! If so, they have behaved with the basest ingratitude, for but for me — services which nobody but myself could have rendered — he would long ago have been in State's Prison. I voluntarily, and against their remonstrance, renounced his case — and for other reasons than an absence of reward. What my reasons are neither you nor any other person shall ever know. They are in writing, however, and in my possession. Of course they know I will be silent unless I am forced to act otherwise."

The name of this unhappy clergyman is withheld lest the innocent may suffer. He was accused of being an accomplished thief, and of concealing in his left hand a small pair of scissors, which he manipulated with such skill that he cut into the pockets (then worn in the ample skirts of women's dresses) and cleverly extracted purses and wallets. His case was postponed from month to month —

and finally he was allowed to leave the city for his home at the South, where he soon after died — the presumption being, I imagine, that he was insane.

The close of the year 1866 brought no new hopes for the sorely distressed little family in Petersburg. By the closest economy, the most diligent work, — teaching by day, and sewing at night, — the wolf was kept from the door, and the school bills of the boys paid. Small sums came occasionally from the heart-sick worker in New York, — heart-sick because of his own impaired strength and health and the loss of many days from pain and illness, and also his keen anxieties about the future of his native state.

But at Christmas we were all refreshed by a visit from him, and improved the hour by entreating that he should abandon the plan of living in New York. We were most averse to it. There was small hope of our ever being able to exist in that city of costly living and high house-rents. My husband forbore to grieve me, at this sacred time, by opposing me. After he returned to New York, he wrote me : —

"NEW YORK, Jan. 23d, 1867.

"MY DEAREST,

"I am sending you $200, with one hundred and ninety-seven of which you must take up a note due Ashwell, the Northern sutler. This is what remains of money due him to redeem the silver tray from which you parted to purchase shoes for the prisoners. Get a receipt in full from him, get the tray, and restore it to its place in the service. To raise this amount I am sorely pressed. We have had a terribly dull season. I am comforted by the good reports of the children. Tell them that I rejoice to hear of the good progress in their studies, and am particularly delighted with Theo's 'perfect' circular. My heart's desire is that the children be perfect in all things. Pray write often about them. Gordon writes charmingly, but her letters cannot be substituted for yours. Indeed I love you all more and more every day of my life, and I would sacrifice everything to be with you. Next spring you *must* join me. Do let us make the experiment. By hard work and strict economy we may contrive to tide over our difficulties. We must remember that we are poor, and must act accordingly. We must be content to live humbly. *Anything* is more tolerable than the life we now live. Business of every kind is extremely dull here, but I get some practice. I argued on a 'Demurrer' the other day and was greatly complimented — the Chief Justice again remarking; 'it is refreshing to hear a good argument by a good lawyer.'

"Devotedly, R. A. P."

"March 5th, 1867.

"My Dearest, — To-morrow I will send you a certified cheque for $50. Would it were more! For a month I have been extremely pressed for money, but I still hope for easier times. My income is very precarious. Don't imagine I have the least idea of abandoning my experiment here. 'I mean to fight it out on this line' to the end of the struggle. My practice increases slowly but surely, and is based, I believe, on a conviction of my competency. Thank God what I have accomplished, though small, has been achieved by my own unaided exertions, and without the least obligation to a human being. I have no patron. I have never solicited business. My only arts are, work and devotion to study. These expedients may be slow of operation, but they are sure, and they leave my dignity and self-respect uncompromised. I am not conscious of having received a favor since my residence in New York

— and when the victory is achieved, I shall feel inexpressible gratification in saying, with Coriolanus, '*Alone* I did it!' When I speak of 'favor' I mean in the way of my profession. Of personal kindness I have been the grateful recipient — though not in many instances. Judge ——— was perpetually obtruding his promises upon me until at last I told him I needed no help and would accept no succor. Of course he is offended. Let him be! All his professions of regard are developed to be an interested scheme to press me into his service.

"And now one more word. You must come to me. I cannot live without you. Is not poverty better than such an existence? May we not live here humbly, but content in one another's presence? I do not see that it is possible for me to get employment in Virginia. Let us abate something of our pride and ambition, and be content to live poorly and obscurely. We can at least be sustained by our mutual love and admiration. What care we for the world?

"Devotedly, R. A. P."

A very dull season succeeded these brave words. My poor general suffered greatly from neuralgic pains in his head; no new cases came into his office. He writes: —

"I cannot account for it! Everything looks so much less promising — but really now I *must* remain here. I have no money to get away! Never before have I been so sick at heart. I often fear I can bear no more. I would come to you — supremely wretched as I am — but for the fact that I am without money to pay my expenses. In truth I haven't a cent in the world! Yesterday I had one dollar, but meeting a poor little boy about Willy's size with an arm just broken, I gave him the last of my fortune. Why my landlord trusts me, I know not. But he seems to have faith in me, and is willing to wait until I earn something."

This letter was soon followed by another, — indeed he wrote me every day, — and he hastened to say: —

"I felt ashamed of my last letter, but the truth is my 'business' is oppressively stagnant — from what particular cause, I cannot conjecture. Whether it be the result of accident, or of causes which portend an ultimate failure, I cannot pretend to affirm. If a breeze does not come soon, I shall be at a standstill. What then? My family is dependent exclusively upon my scant earnings. If they fail, I see no hope in another quarter. This is the apprehension that kills the soul within me. The catastrophe haunts me like a spectre, and clouds my spirit with a perpetual gloom. God only knows what the event will be — but I should not talk in this strain. I shall relax no effort. On the contrary, I never worked as strenuously in my life. God willing, my earnest efforts to subsist my darling family may yet be successful. It is for them I toil, and richly do they deserve every blessing. This thought, above all else, encourages me. May God bless them!

"Devotedly, R. A. P.

"P.S. I see I repeated the sin for which I sought excuses. The present lull in my practice I attribute to the general stagnation of business. Mayhap the breeze will come before long.

"An unwelcome breeze of another kind is now busy near me. An immense fire is raging in rather close proximity to the 'Waverly,' and I have some apprehensions of a move. The Winter Garden Theatre and the Southern Hotel are in flames. How the boys would enjoy the spectacle! I suppose there are fifty steam-engines spouting their streams and thousands of people looking on. To-day, for the first time, we have an indication of approaching spring, and as they are painting my office, I mean to stroll about the city in enjoyment of the sunshine."

He had now lived in New York a year and a half — and had borne the intense heat of summer in the crowded district. Except for one visit to Virginia, and an occasional Sunday to Fordham to visit his old comrade in Congress, Mr. Haskins, he had not left his narrow quarters for any recreation whatever.

CHAPTER XXIX

IN April my husband exultantly announced that he had "eight little cases" on the calendar; on May 14 he wrote: —

"I am over head and ears with work, preparing Mrs. ——'s case for trial. It is infinitely troublesome; *but* if I win, my fee will be $2000 — otherwise nothing."

He did win! In July he received his fee! Within two weeks I had wound up all my small affairs in Petersburg, kissed "good-by" to my tearful little band of music scholars, sent my Aunt Mary with my Gordon and little Mary to "The Oaks" in Charlotte County to spend the rest of the summer, persuaded my sable laundress, Hannah, that New York was an earthly paradise, and taken passage thither with her and five of my little brood.

A hot morning in July found us at City Point before sunrise, waiting for the *Saratoga*, one of a bi-weekly line of two steam-boats, now coming from Richmond on its way to New York. The *Saratoga* and her consort, the *Niagara*, had the right of way at that time with no competitors, and could take their own time without let or hindrance. They travelled the path now traversed by the many fine ships of the Old Dominion Line, and travelled it alone except for an occasional Clyde boat or two.

As we waited, our noisy little engine puffed away impatiently. The conductor hoped for a possible passenger for his return trip to Petersburg, and had arrived at the terminus of his short road too soon.

City Point — lately a place of strategic importance, where the great ships of the Federal army had anchored, where Mr. Lincoln had been entertained by General Grant, where General Butler had long made his headquarters — was now silent and deserted. Two years before the last of General Butler's gunboats had steamed away. Not a shade tree, not a "shanty," remained to mark the occupation of the Federal troops. An unsheltered platform afforded the only place for a traveller to rest while waiting for the boat, unless he could content himself with the dust-covered seats in the forlorn little car and the limited view from the narrow, dirty car window. Out on the platform, seated on his own boxes, the traveller could see the sweep of the noble James River, broadened here into a sea as it took into its bosom the muddy waters of the Appomattox. Landward there was little to be seen except an unbroken waste of dusty road and untilled field.

At a little distance a thin line of smoke indicated a small log cabin and the presence of inhabitants. Outside the hut there was a "patch" of corn and cabbages, and a watermelon vine sprawled about, searching for the sweet waters wherewithal to fill the plump green melons it had brought forth. A suspicious hen was leading her brood as far from the engine as possible, and a pig in an odoriferous pen was leaping on the sides of his stye and clamoring for his breakfast. Presently a languid negro woman emerged from the cabin, and stooping over the cabbages, selected a large leaf, which she proceeded to bind with a strip of cloth around her forehead. She sauntered toward us and remarked that it was "gwine to be a mighty hot day." She had risen early, she said, to see the boat pass. Her son Jim was kitchen boy on the *Saratoga*, and not allowed to leave the boat, but she could see him and "tell 'im howdy." She "cert'nly thought Sis Hannah lucky to git to go Nawth" (Hannah was rather rueful and teary, having just parted from a Jim of her own). "She would cert'nly go Nawth" herself if she wasn't "'bleeged to stay at the Pint on account of the pig an' chickens an' things." She was like the two old maids in Dickens's funny story, who lived in the greatest discomfort in a crowded quarter on the Thames, but could not even consider the possibility of moving — which they could well afford to do — because of the trouble of moving "the library," a small collection of books which any able-bodied market-woman could easily have carried in her basket.

My own movables were really of less importance than those of my new acquaintance. Hers represented the entire furnishing of a home — a home sufficient for her needs. Mine were the melancholy wreckage of a home which had been enriched with such treasures as are collected in a prosperous and happy life: only what had been saved by a good neighbor and a faithful servant from the sacking of our house at Cottage Farm — a few damaged books, a box of sacred silver, and one trunk, which sufficed for my own garments and for the slender wardrobes of my children. I was on my way to keep house in New York with a service of silver and a few rain-and-mud-stained books which had been picked up on the farm by our good John.

My heart was heavier than my boxes, as I waited for the boat. All the sad foreboding letters my general had written me rose up to fill me with doubt and alarm. He had rented a furnished house and had paid the first quarter of the $1800 it was to cost us. That sum seemed to me simply enormous, but he had spent weeks in hunting throughout the length and breadth of New York for the humble little home of his imagination. This house was far out on an avenue in Brooklyn. I was afraid of it! I was apprehensive that a very large hole indeed had been made in the $2000. Moreover, my heart was sick in leaving Virginia — dear old Virginia, for which I cherished the inordinate affection so sternly forbidden by the Apostle. Six years of sorrow and disaster had borne fruit. "Truly," I thought:—

"All backward as I cast my e'e
Seems dark and drear:
And forward though I canna' see
I doubt and fear."

And then I had just parted with my dear aunt and my scarcely dearer daughters, with old friends and neighbors, with affectionate servants. And I was *tired* — tired unto death!

But the boat, churning with its great paddle-wheels the muddy waters of the James, was approaching, the captain and an early riser or two leaning over the deck railing. My little boys ran gayly over the gang-plank as soon as it was lowered. Hannah clung tearfully to her acquaintance of an hour. The gang-plank was hauled in, the great paddle-wheels turned, and we were off, on our way to our new home.

"Good-by, Dixie," called out my boys.

"Not yet, young gentlemen," said the captain; "we are still in Dixie waters, and will be until we reach the sea."

As we sat on deck, steaming down the river, the passengers eagerly scanned the shores and recounted the events of the late war. The last time I had sailed down this river each point was interesting from Colonial and Revolutionary associations. Now all these were forgotten in its later history. Every spot was marked as the scene of some triumph or occupation of the Northern army — of some disaster or humiliation of the South.

There were few passengers — three charming young ladies with their mother, returning home after a visit to the Cullen family of Richmond; a group of teachers going home to New England for their vacation; a comfortable negro mammy with her basket, very proud to repeat again and again that she was "just from Mobile, Alabama," to whom Hannah looked up with deference and respect; and half a dozen or more tourists from New York returning from an inspection of the historic places in and around Richmond. Among these last was an old acquaintance, a Southern man, who at once sought conversation with me. He had lived in

New York before and during the war. He could not conceal his amazement at the desperate venture my general was making. "Of all places," he said, "why, why are you choosing a home in New York?"

"Ask the withered leaf," I answered, "why it is driven by a winter wind to one place rather than another."

"But practically," he replied somewhat testily, "as a matter of prudence and common sense —"

"You think, then," I interrupted, "there is small hope for my poor general in New York."

"New York —" he said slowly and with emphasis, "New York, you will find, has *no use for the unsuccessful man.*"

This was an anxious thought for me to take to my state-room. Once there, and my restless young ones asleep, I realized the desperate venture we were making. Nothing had ever been as I wished. With the war, its causes, its ends and objects, I had nothing to do. My part was solely with the poverty, the heartbreak, the losses, the exile from home.

An unbidden vision, many a time thrust from me, now arose, insistent. My early home — all flowers and music and beauty, my opulent life; the devotion of honored friends — *this* was my heritage! Of this I had been unjustly defrauded. Ah, well! It was an old story — the story of another paradise, another yielding to sinful ambition, another sword, another parting with happiness and home to encounter difficulty, poverty, danger! Then, "The world was all before them where to choose a place of rest — and Providence their guide." Aye! *Providence their Guide!* This, this was the anchor of their hope, and must be mine.

We were awakened before dawn by a confusion on deck — the dragging of heavy ropes, hurried feet, loud shouts. Throwing on my wrapper, I ascended, to find my little boys already on deck, eager for adventure. It appeared we had met our consort, the *Niagara*, in a crippled condition, had thrown her a cable, and were now "put about" to lead her into port at Norfolk. The rising sun found us slowly returning with the *Niagara* in tow; but a few miles from Norfolk she signified her ability to go on without us, and we resumed our onward journey to New York.

Late in the evening all eyes were turned toward land —and presently the sky-line of New York emerged from the mists. Very different was it from the sky-line of to-day. Then we saw only the uneven line of moderate dwellings of unequal height, broken here and there by the upward-pointing fingers of the churches. There was no "Brooklyn Bridge" spanning the East River, no Babel-like towers of the modern sky-scraper, no great statue — like a bronze figure on a newel-post — of Liberty with her torch and coronal of stars. (I never did admire Miss Liberty. I always sympathized with the afflicted sculptor who exclaimed, as his vision was smitten by the giantess, "If this be Liberty, give me Death.")

We were, after much delay, "warped" into our own berth, and the "dear old muggy atmosphere" of New York stormed my unwilling senses: atmosphere thickened and flavored, after a sweltering summer day, with coal smoke, street-filth, and refuse of decaying fruit and many cabbages.

But all things were forgotten when we descried the slight figure of my general on the pier! Very thin and wan did he look, sadly in need of us. He took us, a party of eight, to a neighboring restaurant for dinner; and then we crossed the ferry and in the horse-cars, through miles and miles of lighted streets, we reached our little home, far away on the outer edge of Brooklyn.

The morning after our arrival we rose early to look about us. We were in an unsubstantial new house, narrow as a ladder and filled with unattractive furniture. Hannah agreed to take care of the children, and I set forth to find a market. After walking several blocks in different directions I concluded there was no market within reach, and I began to doubt my ability to provide a dinner. A fat, stolid-looking policeman strolled near me as I ventured: —

"Can you tell me, Mr. Officer, where I can find an honest butcher?"

"I'll be hanged if I know one," he replied.

I considered. We had brought biscuit and crackers. I must find some milk.

"Can you tell me, then, where I can get pure milk?"

My policeman whistled! I don't know what there was in my appearance that tempted him to "guy" me, but with a droll twinkle in his eye he said: —

"Now look 'ere, lady! If you was to go on a little further, you'd get to Flatbush; and then you'd see the mizzable critters standing up to their knees in stagnant water, with their hoofs rotting off. Sure and you wouldn't want any of their milk!"

The neighborhood was sparsely settled; a number of vacant lots surrounded our house, which was one of a row all alike. I reflected that the people living in those houses must occasionally eat! And so I walked on and on until I reached a cross street on which cars were running. There I found a stand of cakes and apples, before which a woman sat knitting. "My good woman," I said amiably, "are your cakes *plain?*"

She dropped her work and glared at me. "*Clane*, is it! You think I put dirt in 'em?" Her manner was so threatening that I turned and fled. Her voice pursued me — "An' the blarney of her;" (mimicking), "'Me good ooman'! 'Me good ooman,' indade! — the loikes of her!"

What my mistake had been I could not then imagine. I now know that I had, unconsciously, a manner unwarranted by my appearance. Turning up a new thoroughfare, I encountered a grocery store, with vegetables and fruit at the door. There I learned with terror the cost of provisions in this part of the world. At home I could buy a chicken for 25 cents — here I must give 30 cents for a pound of him! Whortleberries (the grocer called them "blueberries") could be bought at home for a few pennies a quart. Here 20 cents was demanded for a shallow box of withered specimens. Fifty cents in Petersburg would buy a large beefsteak. I purchased an infant steak for $1.50, and with this I turned my steps homeward.

A small shanty, a squatter's hut, was in the corner of the vacant lot behind our house. Two or three children were playing in the dirt at the door, and a goat eating paper beside them. Ah! there was a cow tethered to a tree not far away!

A kindly-faced Irish woman answered my knock. I frankly told her my dilemma and she sympathized at once. Her name was Mrs. Foley, and she would milk her cow in my sight morning and evening, just behind my house, so I could be sure of the purity of the milk. "An' sure in a wake ye'll see the darlint fatten," she assured me. And a great comfort was old Mrs. Foley all the time I lived near her.

I must confess the days passed wearily enough through July and into August. The heat was extreme and of a depressing quality. We were so far away from my general's office that his long journey morning and evening, accompanied by Theo, was exhausting to both of them. I taught Mary and Roger, but the children were very listless and unhappy. They found no pleasure in walking up and down the uninteresting sidewalk of a hot, dreary street. Loneliness, enhanced by the far-off hum of the city, the mournful fog-horns and whistles on the river, and the not less depressing sounds from the incessant pianos around us, oppressed us all. We seemed to find nothing to take hold of, nothing to live for.

I one day found Hannah raining tears into her tubs as she washed our linen, and having no mind to have my handkerchiefs anointed with other tears than my own, I essayed to comfort her. Finally she confessed she had never seen New York. She didn't know if it was "*thar*"—for she'd "never seen sight of it." Moreover, Jim was writing to ask her what she thought of Central Park and she "cert'nly was 'shamed to tell Jim she had heerd tell of it but never set foot in it."

I had an inspiration. "Hannah," I said, "we have a steak for dinner. You can broil a steak and boil some potatoes and rice in a few minutes. Come, leave the tubs, run up and dress, and help me with the children. We will all go to Central Park, spend a pleasant afternoon, and get back in time for dinner."

We were a large party, and could not get off, having taken a hasty luncheon, until nearly two o'clock. But the summer afternoons were long and we had no misgivings. I had no idea of the distance, nor did I know of any route to the Park, save the horse-car and ferry on our side, a walk up Wall Street to Broadway, and the lumbering Broadway omnibus with two horses for the rest of the way. At four o'clock we arrived in sight of Central Park! A black thunder-cloud came up, and we alighted from our stage in a drenching rain. Of course we must return without seeing the Park, but to our joy we found a line of horse-cars waiting at the gate for return passengers, and dripping wet, we took shelter in one of these and were soon on our way homeward. At the end of our journey there was Theo, with umbrellas—now useless, for more thoroughly drenched we could not well have been,—and his father!—Well, his father was almost in a state of nervous prostration! Hannah's spirits thereafter were worse than ever. She lost all interest in work, and spent much of her time leaning over her area gate and gazing into the street. Once I asked her what she was looking at.

"Dat po-white-folks creeter hollerin' 'soap fat,'" she answered. "Lawd! I wonder if dat ole creeter got wife!"

We were both mystified by the street cries. One man we found was *not* crying: "Frank Potter," "Frank Potter," but "rags, bottles." But another cry, "Pi-*ap*,—Pi-*ap*," much perplexed us. Finally Hannah brought in a very hard, knotty, green apple, the "pi-ap" man had given her as a sample of his wares. "Dar is his 'pi-aps,'" she explained. Light broke upon my benighted intelligence. "Why, Hannah," I said, "he means pie-apples!" "Good Gawd A'mighty!" she exclaimed. "Is *dat* de bes' dey can do!"

In August she entreated to be sent home. In vain I too entreated. I felt that this was the last straw! What could I do in this strange city with no faithful person to leave occasionally with the children? I offered anything — everything — larger liberty, more wages.

Hannah said solemnly, "You knows I likes you and de chillern — but I can't stay. I'se *feared* to stay! I can't live in no place where folks plays de piano all day Sunday. I'se boun' to git out. Somp'n gwine to happen in dis Gawd-forsaken place." Then after a thoughtful pause she added pensively: "*De watermillions is ripe at home!* I done wrote to Jim to git me one — a big one — and put it in a tub o' cole water erginst I come."

With Hannah I lost the last link that bound me to the old Virginia of my childhood, my last acquaintance with the kindly old-time negro and the dialect so expressive, so characteristic.

I filled her place with an Irish woman who served me faithfully for many years, and was wont to commiserate me for all I had suffered "with that nayger in the house." Her scorn of the negro knew no bounds. She never knew how deeply I mourned my loss.

The pain of parting from friends, the doubt of the future, the dreams of my early home, filled my heart with anguish; but I had but one consuming desire — to sustain and strengthen the dear one who had fought so many battles, and was now confronted with the stern struggle for existence. To be cheerful for his sake, to press strong hands over my own breaking heart — this was the task I set for myself.

CHAPTER XXX

NOVEMBER found us at the end of a long, dull season. No business had come into the little law-office — the centre of all our hopes. We had made no friends among our neighbors, to whom, of course, we had made no advances. The silence was broken, however, one evening by a visit from a well-groomed, handsome young fellow, who, with many apologies, requested an interview with General Pryor.

"So the reporters have found us out," said my general, but he was mistaken. His visitor had "ventured to call for advice — not legal advice exactly" — but he wished to know the General's opinion upon a matter of infinite importance to himself and to his wife. "Doubtless we had heard his wife singing," — we had — "she was a fine musician, but one could not live on music."

To this my husband readily assented. He had a deeply rooted aversion to the piano, which he believed to have been an invention of the Evil One in a moment of unusual malignity.

"The question I wish to ask, General," said the young fellow, "is this, Would you advise me to go into politics, law, or the coffee business?"

"The coffee business, most decidedly," said my husband; "I have tried the other two and have a poor opinion of both of them."

The interviewer left, perfectly satisfied to enter the coffee business. Through the open window we could hear the words of a song from the "fine musician" — presenting, as it were, a solution of the problem: —

> "It is time for the mower to whet his scythe
> For 'tis five o'clock in the morning."

We never learned to what extent politics and the profession of the law had suffered, nor how much the coffee business had gained. One thing was certain: the suggestion of the fair singer, so freely given to the breeze, was not needed by me; for my scythe was always in active operation before five o'clock in the morning. When "the sun came peeping in at morn," he always found me up and dressed and ready for his greeting.

Then — as for many times before and after — our case seemed too desperate for rest. Often after our slender breakfast not an atom of food was left in the larder. A mouse would in vain have sought our hospitality. The corner grocer had once trusted us for provisions as far as twenty-five dollars' worth, but had taken his seat in the front hall and there remained until he was paid! The bitter experience was never repeated. But as surely as the ravens were sent to feed Elijah did the Power that esteems us of more worth than many sparrows — many ravens — send us something every day; some small fee for a legal service or for an article written for the *News*. My general would bring this treasure home, Anne would be sent on a flying errand for "a bit of a shteak" — and Mr. Micawber never gathered around his suddenly acquired chops a more hopeful brood than our own.

Once Mr. John R. Thompson, editor of the *Literary Messenger* and later of the *New York Evening Post*, fresh from England, where he had hobnobbed with Carlyle, Tennyson, and Dickens, came to dinner. I had little to offer him except a biscuit and a glass of ale. He did not mind. He had known Edgar Allan Poe, and many another poverty-stricken genius who had enriched the pages of the *Literary Messenger* for sums too pitiful to mention. The straits of scholarly men were familiar to him and detracted nothing from his interest in the men themselves. To be sure they were more interesting if they walked the midnight streets in default of other shelter than the stars (and there might be worse) like Johnson or Savage or Goldsmith or others of the Grub-street fraternity; — still, the victims of a revolution were quite miserable enough to satisfy the imagination. Misery is, after all, more picturesque than happiness and ease.

John Mitchell, the Irish patriot, was another visitor, — railing against the English government and declaring he would yet live to "strike the crutches from the old hag, on the British throne"; talk to which no stretch of politeness could induce me to listen. I had been taught to love the good, young queen, of whom the English philanthropist, Joseph John Gurney, had told me when I, a child of eight years, had sat upon his knee in my uncle's house in Virginia.

An agreeable old German gentleman, whom we had known in Washington, also came from New York to see us. "Oh, Pryor, Pryor," he exclaimed, *how* could you bring Madam to this mel-*an′*-choly place?"

The place would have been paradise to us if only God would give us bread for our children. We had come to fear we would never have more — perhaps not this. The society — exclusively of "Adullamites" like ourselves — was not conducive to hope and cheerfulness. Very few Southerners were at that time in New York. We were pioneers. Truly they were all — like the followers of David — "in distress, in debt, and discontented."

Just at this anxious time I received a letter from my dear Aunt Mary. She felt that she was incurably ill. While she had strength, she would come, place Gordon safely in her father's house, and then die in my arms! In a few days she would arrive in New York and I must meet her at the boat with provision for having her borne to a carriage.

This was overwhelming news. How could I provide comforts for my more than mother? There was but one thing left us. We must pledge our service of silver — a testimonial service with a noble inscription, presented, we remember, to my general by the Democratic party of Virginia after he had fought a good fight against the peril threatened by the "Know Nothing" party. This silver was very precious. Sell it we could not, but perhaps we could borrow a few hundred dollars, giving it as security.

The idea of a pawn-broker never occurred to us. It seems to me now that I had then never heard of a pawn-broker!

But not a great many years before this, as we remember, when I was fifteen years old, this dear aunt who had reared me had suddenly discovered that the child was a woman. She must see the world. She must travel to Niagara Falls, visit all the great cities and see their museums, libraries, theatres, what not; she must have hats from Mme. Viglini in New York, gowns from Mrs. McComas in Baltimore, — and jewels from Tiffany's. From the latter my adoptive father had bought me lovely turquoise, rubies, white topaz necklaces, and jewelled combs. Surely, I now thought, this will be the place where I may be remembered and find some kindness. Accordingly I repaired thither and made my plea. I was told, of course, that the firm must see the silver. Naturally none of the gentlemen who talked with me could remember ever having heard of me before. I must send the silver and then return for my answer. Accordingly I boxed it, sent it, and on the third day presented myself — a very wistful figure — at the silver counter. A tall young man, whose name I learned afterwards, said to me with some hauteur, "Madam, we have weighed your silver, and will allow you $540 for it."

"I will redeem it soon, I hope," I answered.

"Redeem it! Madam, this is not a pawnshop! We *buy* silver."

"Then will I not get it back again?"

"Certainly not!"

I hesitated. My need was sore — but oh, to part forever with this sacred inheritance for my children!

"You had as well realize," said my tall young man, — and he looked to me colossal, — "that you will never have occasion to use silver again. You had as well let it go to the crucible first as last. You will, of course, be obliged to live humbly hereafter, and —"

But I had risen in great wrath against him. Flushed and indignant I retorted, "You mistake, sir! I shall use my silver again! I shall not live humbly always," and left the store.

But once again on the sidewalk with the sharp November wind blowing in my face I remembered my dear invalid. I remembered my cold house, in which there had been provided no furnace, no stove, nothing but open grates for heating. I knew then as well as I know now that the firm was in no wise responsible for the discourteous language of its representative. I had only happened to encounter a fanatic, a hater of the South, — and it was not the first time. Possibly should I return and seek another one of the corps of clerks I might fare better. But no! I would perish first.

Just at this moment I recollected that my dear old chaplain-father had said, in bidding me good-by, "If you ever need a friend, you may advise with *my* friend in New York — Henry Corning."

This sent me to a directory in a near-by drug store, where I found "Corning" and an address to a bank on Broadway. I repaired thither, and was directed to a private room, where a venerable gentleman rose to greet me and offer me a seat. I was very tired and miserable, but I told my errand as best I could.

" I have not the pleasure of knowing your father," said the gentleman, looking at me kindly through his spectacles (and down went the mercury of all my courage), " but," he added, " I think my nephew, Henry Corning, is your man. I have heard him speak of the Rev. Dr. Pryor. I will give you his address. *My* name is Jasper Corning."

I am sure there were tears in my eyes when he looked up, as he handed me a slip of paper, for he added kindly: " I feel certain Henry will not fail you. Don't despair! God is good."

Another omnibus ride brought my heavy heart to the door of Mr. Henry Corning, in Madison Avenue. He was sitting at his desk on the ground floor — and without one word of response to my simply told story turned to his desk and wrote his check for $500!

"I will send you the silver immediately," I said — but he only bowed, and with " My regards to your father," he allowed me to take leave.

I called at Tiffany's on my return, gave an order at the desk, paid the cartage, and ordered the silver to be addressed to Mr. Corning.

When the time came, a year afterwards, for me to redeem it, I saw Mr. Corning again, thanked him for his kindness, and said, " I am now ready to redeem the silver." He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and asked, " What silver? "

"Surely," I exclaimed in great alarm, "surely you received it."

"Oh, well," he replied, "if you say so, I suppose it is all right. I have never seen your silver. There's a box there in the corner. The box has not been opened since you sent it."

My dear aunt had her wish. She died in my house. She was ill a long time. Through the kindness of a Southern friend I was introduced to Dr. Rosman, who attended her with devotion and skill. He was the gentlest and kindest of physicians. He admired and appreciated her, and truly she was a *grande dame* in every respect; courteous, dignified, and beautiful, even at sixty years of age.

> "When faith and Hope, which parting from her never
> Had ripened her just soul to dwell with God,
> Her alms and deeds and all her great endeavor
> Were never lost, nor in the grave were trod."

She lives, I humbly trust, in two children of her adoption, who owe to her all they are or ever hope to be.

The struggle, the wounds, the defeats we suffer at each other's hands may all be classed under the head of battles, — battles where the ultimate defeat or victory is in our own hands, — in the harm or good done to our souls. The fight in the field ended, hostility, hatred, bitterness, should also end; but, alas, the battles of prejudice, resentment for unforgiven injuries, may continue for years. Some of these my story compels me to record, but as old Thomas Fuller quaintly says: "These battles are here inserted, not with any intent (God knows my heart) to perpetuate the odious remembrance of mutual wrongs, that heart-burnings may remain when house-burnings have ceased, but only to raise our gratitude to God that so much strife should have raged in the bosom of so fair a land, and yet so few scars remain."

CHAPTER XXXI

WHILE these sad days and nights of heaviness hung over us, we were painfully conscious that some of our own people misunderstood my husband's position in New York. Our having left Virginia was resented at the time, and now General Pryor's avowed belief that the salvation of the South could only be assured by acquiescence in the inevitable, and in the full exercise of justice to the negro, was most unacceptable. This was before the right of suffrage had been conceded to the negro; in the interval between the fall of the Confederacy and the Reconstruction period, — an interval during which the South was in a condition of resentment and agitation which portended a possible renewal of the conflict, — one of General Pryor's friends wrote him of the feeling against him and the cause.

The following answer to this letter was sent by my husband to the *Richmond Whig*, and puts him on record before the world at a time when such opinions were decidedly adverse to the feelings of many of his own personal friends. It required courage to write this letter. Since that time the prophetic words have been fully justified by subsequent events, and the unwelcome sentiments are to-day fully indorsed by the South. They are pregnant with wisdom, perhaps as much needed now as at the time they were uttered.

"NEW YORK, October 5, 1867.

"MY DEAR SIR: I was apprised before the receipt of your letter that a certain paper of Virginia had stigmatized me as a 'Radical' and had otherwise imputed to me sentiments inimical to the interests of the South. But the silly story I disdained to contradict, while it rested on the authority of the irresponsible person who propagated it. Since you say that my silence is construed into a sort of acquiescence in the reproach, I empower you to repel the accusation with the utmost energy of indignant denial. I have not the vanity to imagine that my opinions are of the least consequence to any one; but, because they have been brought into controversy, and have been the occasion of subjecting me to some unmerited animadversion, I will tell you very frankly and freely in what relation I stand to the politics of the day.

"In the first place, then, neither with politics nor parties have I the least concern or connection. On the downfall of the Confederacy I renounced forever every political aspiration, and resolved henceforth to address myself to the care of my family and the pursuit of my profession. But for all that I have not repudiated the obligations of good citizenship. When I renewed my oath of allegiance to the Union, I did so in good faith and without reservation; and as I understand that oath, it not only restrains me from acts of positive hostility to the government, but pledges me to do my utmost for its welfare and stability. Hence, while I am more immediately concerned to see the South restored to its former prosperity, I am anxious that the whole country, and all classes, may be reunited on the basis of common interest and fraternal regard. And this object, it appears to me, can only be attained by conceding to all classes the unrestricted rights guaranteed them by the laws and by obliterating as speedily and as entirely as possible the distinctions which have separated the North and the South into hostile sections.

"With this conviction, while I pretend to no part in politics, I have not hesitated, in private discourse, to advise my friends in the South frankly to 'accept the situation'; to adjust their ideas to the altered state of affairs; to recognize and respect the rights of the colored race; to cultivate relations of confidence and good-will toward the people of the North; to abstain from the profitless agitations of political debate; and to employ their energies in the far more exigent and useful work of material reparation and development. Striving out of regard to the South to inculcate that lesson of prudent conduct, I have urged such arguments as these: That the negro is, in no sense, responsible for the calamities we endure; that towards us he has ever conducted himself with kindness and subordination; that he is entitled to our compassion, and to the assistance of our superior intelligence in the effort to attain a higher state of moral and intellectual development; that to assume he was placed on this theatre as a reproach to humanity and a stumbling-block to the progress of civilization would be to impeach the wisdom and goodness of Providence; that, considering the comparative numbers of the two races in the South, it would be the merest madness to provoke a collision of caste; in a word, that it is absolutely essential to the peace, repose, and prosperity of the South that the emancipated class should be undisturbed in the enjoyment of their rights under the law, and should be enlightened to understand the duties and interests of social order and well-being. But it has appeared to me that the chief obstacle to a complete and cordial reunion between the North and the South is found in the suspicion and resentment with which the people of these sections regard each other. Hence, while on the one hand assuring the Northern people of the good faith with which the South resumes its obligations in the Union, I have thought it not amiss, on the other, to protest to my Southern friends that the mass of the Northern community are animated by far more just and liberal sentiments toward us than we are apt to suspect.

" And thus, leaving to others the ostensible part in the work of reconstruction, and abstaining studiously from all political connection and activity, I have hoped in some measure, and in a quiet way, to repair the evil I contributed to bring upon the South by availing myself of every appropriate private opportunity to suggest these counsels of moderation and magnanimity. Passion, to which in truth we had abundant provocation, precipitated us into secession; reason must conduct us back into the path of peace and prosperity.

" Hard it may be to purge our hearts of the resentments and prejudices engendered by civil war; but until our minds be enlightened by a philosophic comprehension of the exigencies of our situation, we shall never recover the repose after which the wearied spirit of the South so eagerly pants.

" At whatever risk of personal obloquy, and at whatever sacrifice of personal interest, — and you know it involves both obloquy and sacrifice to talk as I do, — I am resolved to employ all the energy and intellect I may command in the incessant endeavor to promote peace and good-will among the people of the lately belligerent states. What the country needs, what in a most especial manner the South needs, is repose; freedom from the throes of political agitation, and leisure to recruit its exhausted energies. The experience of the past six years should have impressed on the mind of the American nation this most salutary lesson, — a lesson sooner or later learnt by every nation in the development of its own history, — that civil war is the sum and consummation of all human woe. Protesting solemnly the integrity of motive by which I was then actuated, yet I never recall the names of the noble men who fell in our conflict; I never look abroad upon our wasted fields and desolated homes; I never contemplate the all-embracing ruin in which we are involved, the sad eclipse of our liberties and the sinister aspect of the future, without inwardly resolving to dedicate all I possess of ability for the public service to the task of averting another such catastrophe, and to that end of cultivating a spirit of forbearance and good feeling among all classes and all sections of the country.

"These, my dear sir, are the opinions, very briefly and dogmatically delivered, which I entertain touching the actual condition of the Southern states, and the policy proper for them to pursue in the present juncture. They are the result of anxious and conscientious reflection, of much observation of the popular temper of the North, and of extreme and unabated solicitude for the welfare of the community to which I am attached by the strongest ties of filial devotion. With the utmost sincerity of conviction, I believe that, by a system of conduct in conformity to these suggestions, the Southern people may achieve a prosperity and happiness equal to any they ever enjoyed; while on the contrary, I am as firmly persuaded that, by a vain and impatient resistance to an order of things they cannot change, and to a destiny they cannot escape, they will infinitely aggravate the miseries of their present condition, and besides, bring down upon themselves calamities appalling to contemplate.

"I am not acquainted with the classification of parties, but if these opinions make me a 'Radical,' then I am a 'Radical'; for they are deliberately the opinions of

"Very truly yours,

"ROGER A. PRYOR."

CHAPTER XXXII

EARLY in the spring of 1868 we removed to Brooklyn Heights near the Ferry, much nearer my husband's office in Liberty Street. New York had not then stretched an arm across East River and taken into its bosom Brooklyn — already the third city in the Union. The two cities, now one in name, were practically one in interest as early as 1867. A great multitude of the dwellers of Brooklyn crossed the ferry every morning on their way to their daily work in New York. Brooklyn was a huge, overgrown village; a city of churches, a city of homes, and of children innumerable. Every year in May a mighty army — thousands and thousands — of these children paraded the streets under banners from their respective Sunday-schools, — a unique spectacle well worth a pilgrimage thither, provided one could content himself with a precarious footing on a crowded sidewalk; for these children had the "right of way" — and knowing their right, dared maintain it.

In 1867 the streets were so deserted — was not everybody in New York for the day? — that little children adopted them as a perfectly safe playground. There were no elevated railroads, no trolley cars, no automobiles, no bicycles, no electric lights, no telephones.

Our move was signalized by a complication of difficulties. Four of my younger children found this an altogether suitable time to indulge in measles. Hasty visits to a near-by auction room resulted in a few needful articles of furniture which were lent to us — for we could not purchase. The auctioneer was to own them, and reclaim them if not paid for in a certain time. A small room was shelved for the books that had survived the sacking of our house, and to our great satisfaction we found that the much-used books — books of reference — had proven too bulky or too shabby to be stolen. These and other well-worn, well-read books became the nucleus of a large library, and hold to-day in their tattered bindings places of honor denied newer lights of more creditable appearance. We were not aware when we moved to Brooklyn Heights that we had descended into the very centre of the wealthiest society of the city. Had we known this, it would have signified nothing to us. Our extreme poverty forbade any expectation of indulgence in social life, even had we felt we had the smallest right to recognition. We had never known anything about the social ambition of which in later years we hear so much — still less did we now regard it. We "asked our fellow-man for leave to toil," and asked nothing more.

We soon discovered that the people around us lived in affluent ease and elegance — but that was not our affair! We had no place in their world, nor did we desire it. To conceal our true condition was our instinctive impulse, and to that end we shunned notice. Sometimes a great wave of desolation and loneliness — a longing inexpressible for companionship — would possess me. At this time there was a bridge over Broadway below Cortlandt Street. I sometimes, at seasons of great depression, accompanied my husband to his office, and would ascend the steps to this bridge and look up and down the restless sea of passing crowds. Such a sickening sense of loneliness would come over me, I would feel that my heart was breaking. All seemed so desolate, so hopeless, for us in this great unknown world. We knew ourselves not only strangers but aliens, outcasts.

Dear little Willy came to me one day and advised me to change his terrier's name, "Rebel," — a name he had borne by reason of his own disposition, and not at all in honor of the "lost cause." "The boys will stone him," said Willy; "I am going to call him 'Prince' in the street and 'Rebel' at home." On another day his younger sisters were decoyed into the garden of a neighbor, and there informed by the children of the house that we would not be allowed to live in the street — that we were "Rebels, and slave-drivers, and *awful* people!" These painful incidents were of everyday occurrence. "Mamma told me," said one of the little ones, "that God loves us. Will everybody else hate us?" Before very long, however, the little rebels made friends and were forgiven all their enormities.

The good people of Brooklyn at that time were taking up their cobblestones and laying a wooden pavement on Pierpont Street, and fascinating blocks of wood were piled at intervals in the street. Of course, the boys immediately built of them a village of tiny houses, and one day a committee of bright-eyed fellows — Tom and Charley Nichols and Dr. Schenck's boys — waited on me with a request that my little girls be permitted to "come out and keep house" for them. The little girls, they added gallantly, would be allowed to choose the boys! That was not difficult. The small housekeepers walked off with Tom and Charley. "Say," said one of the proud owners of real estate, with a pristine recognition of woman's place in the household, "will your cook give you some potatoes and apples? We've got a splendid fire around the corner."

"Sure, an I'll not lave you do it," said Anne out of the basement window. "Is it burnin' down the place ye'll be afther doin'?" — but a "Please, Anne, dear," from the smallest housekeeper settled the matter. A fire in the street would be a strange spectacle in the Borough of Brooklyn to-day.

A family of healthy children well governed cannot be unhappy, even in the most depressing circumstances. My own little brood positively refused to be miserable. They had literally nothing that must be acquired with money, but their own ingenuity supplied all deficiencies. In the vacant space in the rear of our house there was a cherry tree which never fruited, but bore a wealth of green leaves and blossoms. There the children elected to establish a menagerie. They soon stocked it from the "estray" animals in the street. They were "Rebel," the terrier; "Vixen," the dachshund; "Tearful Tommy," the cat; "Desdemona," a white rabbit; and "Othello," her black husband, purchased from a dealer; and "Fleetwing," the pigeon, which had trustfully entered one of Roger's traps. As there were no stockades, no cages, Fleetwing was tethered to the cherry tree, and as cord might wound her slender leg, a broad string of muslin was provided for her comfort.

One day I heard lamentation and excited barking in the menagerie. Fleetwing had vindicated her right to her name, and was calmly sailing in the blue ether, like a kite with a very long tail — her muslin fetter trailing behind her. We hoped she would return, but she never did. Othello and Desdemona were very interesting. They always came, like children, to the table with the dessert, hopping around on the cloth from corner to corner for bits of celery; but when the fires were kindled, Desdemona breathed coal gas from the register, keeled over, and expired. Othello's mourning coat expressed suitable sorrow and respect, but very soon he too experimented with the register and followed his helpmate.

The time came (with these healthy children to feed) when, like Mrs. Cadwalader, I had to get my coals by stratagem and pray to heaven for my salad oil — with this difference, that my prayer was for daily bread, and that alone. Long and painfully did I ponder the dreadful problem — how to keep my family alive without driving the dear head of the house to desperation. Study, work, unremitting study and work from early morning until late at night was his daily portion. Not until the last expedient had failed should he know aught of my household anxieties.

At last I resolved to go to a dignified old gentleman I had observed behind the desk at a neighboring grocery and tell him the truth. But I remembered my New York experience with the silver. So be it! I had borne rebuff more than once — I could bear it again.

I told Mr. Champney — for this was the name of the old gentleman — that I was the wife of General Pryor, that we had come North to live, that my husband's profession was not yielding enough for our support, nor had we any immediate ground upon which to build hope for better fortune; that I did hope, however, to pay for provisions for my family — sometime, not soon, but certainly if we lived; and that certainly, without food, we should *not* live!

He wished to know if I was the mother of the children he had seen in his store. I answered in the affirmative, and with no further parley he drew forth a little yellow pass-book and handed it to me. "Use this freely, madam," he said; "I shall never ask you for a penny! You will pay me. General Pryor is bound to succeed." He kept his word. His German porter, Fred, came to me every morning for my frugal orders, and gave me every possible attention. At every day of reckoning demanded by myself, my creditor politely remarked, there was "no occasion for hurry"! His name, "S. T. Champney," was, thenceforward, with my children, "the St." — and as such remains in my memory.

The city of Brooklyn had grown almost as rapidly as the Western cities — Chicago, Seattle, and others, and a great number of poor people were crowding into it, seeking homes. Perpetually recurring instances of distress and homelessness appealed to the good women of Brooklyn Heights — Mrs. Bulkley, Mrs. Packer, Mrs. Alanson Trask, Mrs. Eaton, wife of a professor of the Packer Institute, Mrs. Rosman, Mrs. Craig, and others, and they finally resolved to found a home for friendless women and children. They rented a small frame building on one of the upper streets, and in a few months the house was crowded. Mrs. Eaton, early sent by heaven to be my good angel, had longed for an opportunity to relieve my loneliness and isolation, and she procured for me an invitation to join the society of women. I soon became interested, and spent part of every day with the wretched beneficiaries of the charity. Finally our small house was unwisely crowded, and the children became ill. Mrs. Packer took one of the poor little babies in a dying condition to her own home, and nursed it with the utmost tenderness. I gave shelter to one of the women, and others were taken by the different members of the society until we could command healthy quarters for them. We resolved to purchase a large house, and entered with great zeal upon our work. It was my good fortune to discover the present Home on Concord Street, the fine old Bache mansion about to be sold for a beer-garden. I was requested to draw up a petition to the legislature for an appropriation, which I did in the most forceful language I could command. Mrs. Packer went to Albany with it, and $10,000 was immediately granted us. Each of us (we were only fifteen), armed with a little collector's book, undertook to canvass the town. We needed $20,000 more to buy our home.

I went forth with a heavy heart — for I was the only one who had not headed her subscription with $500. I collected a few pitiful sums only. Nobody would listen to me — nobody knew me! I bore it as long as I could, and one evening I announced to my astounded general that I intended to give a concert. He informed me in strenuous English that he considered me a lunatic.

However, I went to work. I engaged a professional reader, who agreed to give his services; persuaded a German music teacher to lend me her pupils; and then looked around for a "star." Investigation resulted in my learning that Madame Anna Bishop was living in New York. Once a very famous prima donna, she was now "shelved," although her voice was still good. She had grown stout, and could no longer create a sensation in "The Dashing Young Sergeant" that "marched away" so gallantly fifteen years before.

I hunted up Madame Bishop. She received my proposition graciously. Would she give an evening for the poor friendless women? "*Give*, my dear lady! I give nothing. Am I not a friendless woman myself! But I'll come for $100, and bring my accompanist. *He* shall give *his* evening. But I never sing for nothing."

I engaged madame — and then I was a busy woman indeed. I hired a hall and two pianos, wrote programmes and advertisements and had rose-colored cards painted, "Soirée, Musical and Literary." I discovered a florist near my hall, and persuaded him to lend me all his plants, — I wrote invitations to my ushers and presented each one with a crystal heart for a badge, — and then I went home, on the great evening, tired to death, and perfectly sure it would end in failure. My general, fully of the same opinion, tried to comfort me by saying that I would know better next time. He went early to the hall, and when I arrived he was pacing the street in front of the door. "The place is crammed full," he announced; "there is hardly standing room."

It wanted but eight minutes to the hour announced for commencing, and Madame Bishop had not arrived. Mrs. Gamp's fiddle-string illustration would have again been a feeble expression of mine. My heart almost failed me. But at last the expected carriage arrived, — madame, her maid, and her accompanist. To my exclamation of relief, she threw back her head and laughed heartily: "Oh, you amateurs! Now, you just go and get a seat and enjoy the music. We'll go on by the programme all right."

Advance sale of tickets had yielded $100. This I handed madame in an envelope. All went well. She was very good indeed — very spirited. The dashing young sergeant marched away with all the fire of earlier days. Everybody was pleased. When I thanked madame, she slipped into my hand her own donation — $50. The next day I entered $500 upon my collection book and, thus vindicated, I was able to face my colleagues.

A great and useful charity is this Home for friendless women and children in Brooklyn. And noble were the women I learned to know and love who worked with me there. They made me their corresponding secretary, and liked everything I did for them.

Some women formerly of high position in the South found temporary refuge in this Home. The world would be surprised if I should give their names! In the depth of winter I once found a woman bearing one of Virginia's oldest names. She was sitting upon a box beside a fireless stove, warming her baby in her bosom. Her husband had gone out to hunt for work! She had no fire, no furniture, no food! Another, belonging to a proud South Carolina family, I found in an attic in New York. She had had no food for two days! These, and more, I was enabled by the lovely women of Brooklyn to relieve, delicately and permanently. Better, truer, more cultivated women I have nowhere known. Of the extent of my own anxieties and privations they never knew. Something within me proudly forbade me to complain. My dear Mrs. Eaton alone knew the true condition of my own family. She lives to bear testimony to the truth of the strange story I am telling — the story of a Southern general and his wife, who showed smiling, brave faces to the world, and suffered for ten years the pangs of extreme poverty in their home, working all the time to the utmost limit of human endurance. Not one moment's recreation did we allow ourselves — our "destiny was work, work, work" — and patiently we fulfilled it. Hard study filled my husband's every waking hour, and few were his hours of sleep. Excessive use of his eyes night and day so injured them that at one time he found reading impossible. Gordon read his law aloud to him for many weeks. I once copied a book of law forms for him as we had no money to buy the book — the hardest work I have ever done! It was my custom to retire at night with my family and, after all were quietly sleeping, to rise and with my work-basket creep down to the library, light a lamp, and sew until two or three o'clock in the morning. There were seven children. All must be clothed. I literally made every garment they wore, even their wraps in winter. Through the kindness of Professor Eaton arrangements were made that enabled my little girls to attend the Packer Institute, founded by the most gracious and beautiful of women, Mrs. Harriet Packer. When they went forth in the morning to their school, they all presented a fresh, well-groomed appearance — the result of the midnight lamp and work-basket!

I remember but one occasion when any member of the family indulged in outside amusements. Just across the river were the brilliant theatres and opera-houses of the great metropolis. Here in Brooklyn were plays, concerts, balls, evening parties. The children for five or six years after our coming North never supposed these things possible for them. I cannot say the fate of Tantalus was ours. True, the rivers of delight were around us, but we never "bent to drink" — never gave the "refluent waters" an opportunity to shrink from our lips. We simply ignored them. But Gordon and Roger had one great pleasure in 1868. It would be hard to make this generation understand the emotions with which they saw and heard Dickens. His books had for a time made the very atmosphere of their lives! They talked Dickensese to each other, and fitted his characters into the situations of their own lives. Now they were to look upon the man himself. Of this experience my daughter writes me: —

"I remember as I awaited his appearance how my heart beat. I doubt whether the recrudescence of Shakespeare would move me as much now. At the appointed hour he ascended the little platform of Plymouth Church with a rapid gait, almost running up the few steps, as I remember; but truly my heart was thumping so, and there was such a mist of agitation before my eyes, that I did not at once clearly discern the great magician. When my brain cleared with a jerk and I could make myself believe that Dickens was really before me, what did I see? A very garish person with a velvet-faced coat and a vast double watch chain — all, as well as his rather heavy-nosed unspiritual face perfectly presented in the photograph of the time. He had an alert, businesslike way with him, no magnetism, as I recollect. But his reading impressed me then as now, as perfection of elocution — natural, spontaneous, as if he himself enjoyed every word of it and had never done it before. He read the trial scene from Pickwick inimitably. I think I have since seen the criticism that he did not give us the Sam Weller of our imagination, but certainly it did not so impress me then. I was absolutely satisfied. He followed Pickwick with Dr. Marigold, for which I cared much less.

Dickens's pathos, even in my days of thraldom, almost always struck me as mawkish. Somehow, in looking at the man, it was hard to believe in his sentiment — though I still think much of it sincere. But truly, in appearance, he is what is now called 'a bounder.' I never read Forster's life of him: I know him only through his own books, but my impression of him from his appearance is that he was not exactly a gentleman. Yet I forgot everything except delight in the reading — after my initial shock of the velvet coat, the ponderous watch chains, the countenance to match. And to this day one of my most cherished memories is that I saw and heard Dickens."

CHAPTER XXXIII

I SOON found that two of my children were old enough to pine for something more than physical comfort. They did not propose to live by bread alone. The appealing eyes of our daughter Gordon were not to be resisted and, as I have said, she entered the Packer Institute with her little sisters, entering the senior class, where she soon graduated with the first honors,— and where she nobly taught an advanced class, — relinquishing at eighteen years of age all the pleasures to which she was entitled. Theo, I supposed, would learn law in his father's office. But he, too, like Goethe, craved "more light." One day as I was returning from church he asked me, with suppressed feeling, if he was ever to go to college.

I was smitten to the heart! When I repeated this to his father, he declared, "He shall!" And within a few months a scholarship at Princeton was found and promised, provided the boy could pass a creditable entrance examination.

The little man went up alone early one morning to meet his fate. He returned at night. "And did you enter?" we exclaimed. Very calmly he answered: "They were very kind to me at Princeton. I was examined at some length, and I shall enter the junior class."

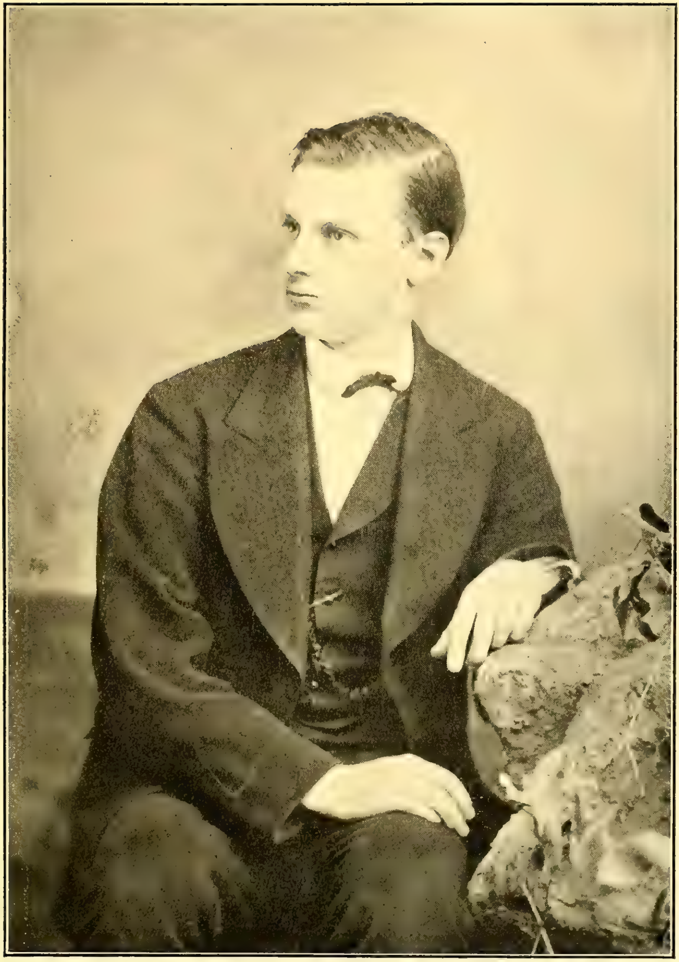
When I packed his small trunk for his collegiate life, I found I had little to put into it — little more than my tears! His first report read, "In a class of eighty-three he stands first."

He maintained this standing for two years. The class included bearded men who had been prepared thoroughly in the best preparatory schools. Theo had received less than two years at Mr. Gordon McCabe's school. All the rest of his time he had given to study, alone, and unassisted.

A day came in Petersburg when he, perceiving the necessities of his family, had sold his beloved rifle for $40. Out of that sum he reserved for himself $2, and returned home with a work on advanced mathematics under his arm.

He was a *perfect* boy. If he ever thought wrongly, I cannot tell — I know he never did wrong. Personally, he was as beautiful as he was good — clear-eyed, serene, with a grand air. "For the future of one of my children," I was wont to say, "I have no fear. Theo will always be fortunate." It was said of him by President McCosh that he was "preternaturally gifted mentally." He always acquired knowledge with perfect ease. He studied and read whatever his father studied or read — politics, literature, and even military tactics. In the latter he was so proficient that when a little lad in linen blouses, the regiments at Smithfield would mount him on a stand and make him drill the companies.

At the end of his collegiate life he wrote: "The professors have been so good as to give me the first honor and also the mathematical scholarship."



Theodorick Bland Pryor.

This scholarship required him to study at least one year in an English university. Accordingly, in the following autumn he was sent, through President McCosh's advice, to St. Peters, Cambridge University. He was just nineteen when he graduated.

He was too young and inexperienced to be a good manager, and soon perceived that his $1000 would not carry him through his year. A prize of a Cambridge scholarship and $40 was offered. He worked for it and won it — binding wet towels around his tired brain as he worked.

I remember one lovely June afternoon, which melted into a perfect moonlight evening. My little girls, attired in white, listened to the home music, — Roger, with his violin, accompanied by his mother on the piano my dear Aunt Mary had bequeathed to Gordon. A hasty ring at the door, a rush of eager steps, and Theo was in my arms! We thought him lovely. His father proudly marked his fine air and, with amusement, the delicate hint of a rising inflection in his voice. Never were people so glad and proud. Once more we were all together.

He decided not to return to England, although his masters at Cambridge wrote him assuring him that, although he "could not win a fellowship without becoming a naturalized British subject," yet he would "ultimately take an excellent degree." He entered the Columbia Law School, that he might fit himself to be his father's partner.

In October he was called to a higher court. One warm evening he walked out "to cool off before sleeping," and we never saw him more!

The tides bore his beautiful body to us nine days after we lost him, and his beloved Alma Mater claimed it. There he lies in the section reserved for the presidents and professors of the University — side by side with the ashes of the Edwards and the Alexanders that await with him the great awakening. His classmates sent to Virginia for a shaft of granite, and upon this stone is inscribed: "In commemoration of his virtues, genius, and scholarship, and in enduring testimony of our love, this monument is erected by his classmates."

Of him a great future was expected. "He was," said one of the journals of the time, "one of the most gifted minds that Virginia ever produced. America probably had not his superior. Only twenty years at the time of his death, his powerful and mature intellect gave assurance of any position his ambition might covet. He was always first, and easily first, in any school, academy, or college that he entered. His powers were indeed marvellous. Proud of being a Virginian, his loss to the state, to the country indeed, is irreparable. In arms and in statesmanship Virginia has nothing to covet, — in letters a new field of glory awaits her. Pryor, foremost in that field, would have filled it with the lustre of his fame. Oh! what a loss, what a loss!"

There is a peculiar bitterness in the early blighting of such powers. But although the laurel was so soon snatched from his brow, he had already worked nobly and achieved greatly. He had done more in his short life than the most of us during a long life. Whether the end came through the hand of violence, or from accident, he could approach "the Great Secret" as did John Sterling, "without a thought of fear and with very much of hope." Such as he confirm our faith in immortality and make heaven lovelier to our thought.

He was a victim of his father's fallen fortunes. Now, surely, Nemesis must be satisfied! Innocent of crime, we had yet suffered full measure for the crime of the nation. Others had been called to give up their first-born sons. We had now given up ours! Was it not enough? All the joy of life was forever ended. Hereafter one bitter memory intensified every pang, poisoned every pleasure,—so clearly did our great bereavement seem to grow out of our misfortunes,—and all these to be the sequence of cruel, terrible, wicked war.

But why should I ask my readers to listen while I press, "like Philomel, my heart against a thorn!" We can change nothing in our lives. We must bear the lot ordained for us! We need not ask others to suffer with us! *Grosse seelen dulden still!*

* * * * * *

The story I am telling must end not later than the year 1900—and I find no fitting place for a brief tribute to another brilliant son whom we lost after that year, unless my readers will forgive me for a word just here. I leave the splendid record of his services as a physician and surgeon, where it is safe to live—in the memories of his brethren at home and abroad. "Pryor's practice" is still quoted in England and France as the salvation of suffering womanhood. But other records are written on the hearts of the poor and humble. "Many a night," said one of his hospital confrères, "with the East River full of ice, and snow and sleet pelting straight in his face, Dr. William Pryor has crossed in a rowboat to see some poor waif at Blackwell's Island upon whom he had operated, — carrying with him some delicacy the hospital diet-sheet did not afford."

He was most richly endowed, physically and mentally, and he gave to suffering humanity all that God had given him.

I resolved, when I consented to write this book, that I would not intrude my own feelings and emotions upon those who are kind enough to read my story. I know, alas, I am not the only one upon whom the tower of Siloam has fallen. We are divinely forbidden to believe ourselves more unworthy than those who escape such disaster.

"The Thorny Path," a painting by P. Stachiewicz, represents women toiling along a perilous path. On one side is a high, barren rock; on the other a ghastly precipice. Safety lies only in the narrow path, uneven with slippery stones and thick-set with cruel thorns. Two women are central figures in the procession: one, ragged and drunken and cursing her lot, reels unsteadily against the flinty wall; another treads the same path with bent head, and hands clasped in prayer. A white "robe of righteousness" has descended upon the latter, and celestial light surrounds her head, albeit the pilgrim feet are unshod and torn with thorns.

WILLIAM RICE PRYOR.

Sometimes a song or picture has taught us more than many sermons. When Christine Nilsson, standing firm and erect with upward look, sang "I KNOW," we were thrilled and surprised into a vivid faith, which had burned with less fervor under the teaching of the pulpit. We had believed, but now we felt that we *knew*, that the Redeemer lives and will stand in the latter day upon the earth, and feeling this, we were comforted.

CHAPTER XXXIV

IN 1872 Horace Greeley was nominated by the Democratic party for the presidency, to oppose General Grant's second term, and wrote to my husband: —

"DEAR GENERAL PRYOR: —

"I want you to help me in this canvass. I want you to go to Virginia and do some work for me there and at the South.

"Your friend,
"HORACE GREELEY."

Mr. Greeley had at first opposed the Civil War. He had suffered great mental distress at its approach. He labored with all his might to prevent a resort to arms — but, when this was inevitable, he followed the advice of Polonius. It was he who raised the cry "On to Richmond," and he was thereafter a powerful supporter of the government. After the surrender, he just as strongly advocated pacific measures, opposed the action of the federal government in holding Mr. Jefferson Davis a prisoner without trial, and, oblivious to all personal and pecuniary consequences, had gone to Richmond and in open court signed the bail-bond of the Confederate President.

It can be easily perceived that the active support of a man like General Pryor — who could remember and use to advantage these facts — might be extremely useful to Mr. Greeley. The temptation appealed, with force, to my husband. Active political life had been his most successful, most agreeable occupation, but he remembered his resolution to *work*, and work in the study of his profession, and declined Mr. Greeley's invitation.

"You are making a great mistake," said one of his friends, "in your office all day, and at home all night. I should like to know how you expect to get along! You never make a visit — you are never seen at a club or any public gathering."

"Very true," said my husband, "but I am persuaded that my only hope for salvation here is to know something, have something the New York people want. They do want good lawyers, and I must study day and night to make myself one."

His friend, John Russell Young, far away in Europe, heard of Mr. Greeley's campaign. Himself an intense Republican and devoted friend of General Grant, he could not learn with equanimity of any added strength to Mr. Greeley from the support of the South. He wrote from Geneva, September 16, 1872: —

"DEAR PRYOR: —

"I saw in the *New York World* that you were to make a speech in favor of Greeley in Virginia, and had my own reflections on the announcement. I should like to exchange observations with Mrs. Pryor on this subject, as she has positive political convictions. But I remember her saying once that darning stockings had a debilitating effect upon literary aspirations — and she made no reservation in favor of politics. At the present moment I should like to enlist her attention and support.

"The idea of R. A. P. — the representative fire-eater, the Robespierre, or Danton, or, if you like it better, the Harry Hotspur of the Southern Revolution, — the one orator who clamored so impatiently for the Shrewsbury clock to strike, — oh, my friend! The spectacle of *this* leader championing Horace Greeley! Can the irony of events have a deeper illustration? Miserere! How the world is tumbling! What can we expect next? Jefferson Davis and Frederick Douglass running on the presidential ticket, in favor of Chinese suffrage! If you really did make a speech, send it to me. I suppose in your own mind you have made many, for events like these develop thought in the minds of all thinking men. I do not see Greeley's election. I have a letter from him written in July which speaks very cheerfully. But I have a letter from the White House quite as cheerful. I cannot think that Grant will be beaten; and am certain, with all deference to Mrs. Pryor's positive political views, that he should not be. I can understand the passionate desire you and your people have for honest reconstruction. I can see how you might even fall into the arms of Horace Greeley to achieve such a deliverance. But there is no honest reconstruction possible under Mr. Greeley and the men who would accompany him in power. The South has its future in its own hands. If the men who led it as you did had followed your example when the war was over, there would be no trouble. But that required courage — a higher courage than ever rebellion demanded; and if the South has not reasserted itself, it is the fault of the Southern men themselves.

"But I will not preach politics from this distance. If you are not in the campaign, keep out! Run over here with Miss Gordon. How delighted I should be to see you. I am sure mademoiselle would revel in Paris. Mrs.

Young would travel with her, too, to Germany, visit all the famous convents and ecclesiastical establishments and, finally, wind up with Paris and an exhausted search through the shops.

"For myself, I feel that I am having opportunities and neglecting them. However, I have always my work, have grappled with French, done something in Spanish, and have designs on the German language. But as you can only eat your artichoke a leaf at a time, French is my main occupation outside my business. I don't have time to play chess — and I presume Miss Gordon will give me a knight when we play next. You mustn't think me utterly good-for-naught. I have finished Carlyle's 'Frederick' in thirteen volumes — think of that! In the summer I dissipated in novels, — 'Don Quixote,' 'Tom Jones,' 'Roderick Random,' — and now I am about to begin 'Romola,' which Bayard Taylor said yesterday was the best historical novel in our language. Remember me most kindly to all at home, and believe me to be, dear Pryor,

"Your friend sincerely,
"JOHN RUSSELL YOUNG."

We had first known John Russell Young as a boy sent by Colonel Forney to report a speech of my husband's in Congress, now on the staff of the *New York Herald*. During a temporary residence in London he began a series of charming letters to my daughter — lasting until the end of his life. From London he wrote: —

"MY DEAR MISS GORDON: —

"I send you two autographs — one is from Dinah Mulock Craik (who wrote 'John Halifax,' you know), the other from Mr. Gladstone, the former Premier.

"I shall try to obtain an autograph of Carlyle, and his photograph, for your library. The old man is very hard to reach — he is very old. I have not seen George Eliot yet, but will. I dined with William Black last evening.

"I have had a good time in London. I never had so much attention in my life — I don't know how it happened, but so it fell. My Macmillan article opened the door, however, of every newspaper and magazine to me — and the door is of no use, except to look inside! But fancy the people I have met! — not, as I said, Carlyle or George Eliot (but she is possible when she comes home), but I think I have dined with nearly everybody else. Green — the short history man — and I have become good friends. I told him how much you liked his book, and he blushed like a June rose. I have dined with Huxley, Tyndall, Froude, Browning, Herbert Spencer, Kingsley, Bryce, Green, Norman Lockyer, William Black, Motley, and I don't know how many others, — so you see, as far as coming abroad has any value in enlarging one's horizon, I have not come in vain. You must forgive the vanity of all this, but when one is away from home, what can one do but write about one's own self?

"I wrote your father last week that I was about to come home. I packed all my trunks and engaged my room on the *Adriatic*, which sails on the 25th. A cable comes from Mr. Bennett asking me to await his coming. So I have unpacked my trunk and again resigned myself to the London fog. If you will gently break the news to the retired statesman who mourns over the decadence of the republic, you will be a dutiful child and my very good friend. I am very much disappointed in not going home. There is a little woman whose eyes are, I suppose, sad enough straining through the mists for a truant lord who seems to wander as long as Ulysses. There are friends whose faces it would be sunshine to see, — and there are duties in the way of educating public opinion on the question of the presidency, — all of which is only a roundabout way of saying I am homesick, and that I would give the best book in my library (you see how extravagant I am) if it were in my power to accept an invitation from your mother to tea. I would even run the risk of a quarrel with your father on politics! Remember me to all at home — to your mother with especial duty, and believe me, my dear Miss Gordon,

"Always yours sincerely,
"JNO. RUSSELL YOUNG."

"P.S. — From a letter your mother has kindly written me, I perceive you are to visit Virginia. Now if you will only justify the hopes of your friends and bring back a descendant of Pocahontas or Patrick Henry or of G. W. to be a comfort to your father and mother, I shall feel you have not visited Virginia in vain. However, as that is a subject from which I have often been warned away by the Pryor family, I shall not venture to give any advice.

"Again your friend sincerely,
"JNO. RUSSELL YOUNG."

"I am sending you," he says in another letter, "a noticeable article on George Eliot's work. You will observe the tendency to criticise, and quotations of little things to sustain an adverse verdict. I remember only better things. Of course I must acknowledge the tinge of bitterness in all of George Eliot's writings, but the latter-day critic brings a railing accusation against the artistic features of her books. He thinks it was a dreadful thing for Dorothea to marry a second time, but how trifling is all this! I always feel when I have finished 'Adam Bede' and 'Middlemarch' like saying in reverence, 'Oh, Mistress! Oh, my Queen!' for she is the mistress and queen of her art, and ought to be mentioned with Carlyle and Hugo."

The "chance" for which General Pryor for nine years had worked and waited came at last. A New York correspondent of the *St. Louis Republican* thus comments upon the event: "General Pryor borrowed the law books which he needed to begin the study requisite to enable him to do justice to his clients, and he studied as he fought—bravely. No man has burned more midnight oil, and from being no lawyer ten years ago, he has grown to be a most accomplished and erudite member of the bar. In his late great speech in the trial of Tilton against Henry Ward Beecher, in resisting the attempt of William M. Evarts, of Beecher's counsel, to prevent the plaintiff from testifying, General Pryor hurled law at the head of Mr. Evarts which the latter in all of his delving had not reached, and Mr. Evarts complimented General Pryor, not only upon the brilliant presentation of the law, but upon his extended acquaintance with the authorities. His speech won the point for Tilton. He is known to be an indefatigable student. Seven hours a day he studies law as though he needs it all on the morrow. No man in New York has a more brilliant future; and when it comes, no man will have so completely carved out his own way and made his own fortune."

This trial against America's great preacher was famous at home and in England. The accusation of Theodore Tilton aroused a tremendous feeling throughout the United States and abroad wherever Mr. Beecher's great reputation had established itself. The trial lasted six months. Mr. Tilton's counsel were Mr. Beach, Hon. Sam Morris, Judge Fullerton, and General Pryor. Arrayed against them were Hon. William M. Evarts, Hon. Benjamin Tracy, Thomas Shearman, and Austin Abbott.

To General Pryor was intrusted all the delicate or obscure questions of law incident upon the case. The press of the day universally awarded him the highest praise for learning and thorough knowledge of his subject. He won a very great reputation, and from that time onward felt that his professional career was to be an active one. The impression the new advocate — the rebel politician and soldier turned lawyer — made upon the correspondents of the press never varied. A New York correspondent of an Ohio paper[1] thus describes him: —

> "General Pryor's reply to Mr. Evarts's was, after all, the greatest surprise of the day. It was so remarkable in many respects, that I am at a loss where to begin the characterization. Not an exciting topic, one would say, for a fiery Southern orator, to analyze the statutes of the state of New York on the subject of evidence from married people. But it was evident from the very first, though formal, sentence, that exploded from General Pryor's lips that he needed no outward occasion to minister excitement to his surcharged batteries of personal electricity. A dry legal question was provocation enough; what he would do under the heat of an impassioned issue is inconceivable, if the proportions of occasion and effect were preserved. His execution, to borrow a musician's term, is prodigious, considered merely as a *tour de force*. It is a volcanic torrent of speech. To say the enunciation is rapid, is nothing: it is lightning-like. The most dex-

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[1] The *Herald and Empire*, Dayton, Ohio.

terous reporters could hardly follow him. Its nervous energy is equally remarkable, and seems to break out from every pore of his body, as well as out of his mouth, eyes, and finger ends. With the legal volume in his left hand, the eye-glass quivering in his right, and jumping to his nose and off again, with or without object, like a thing of life, or emphasizing the utterance with thrusting gestures of its own; his head thrown up, at every beginning his eyes shoot straight at the judge as if they would transfix him, and he drives onward like a Jehu rushing into battle. He has no moderate passages; but perhaps he will avail himself of these effects when he comes to address the jury. And yet, all this prodigious nervous expenditure, so far from drawing off the power of the brain, is only an index of its action; so far from jarring the self-possession and sequence of thought, or the precision of conception and expression, it only enhances and secures all these, as sheer impetus sustains the equilibrium of a wheel. The diction, with all its headlong speed, is perfect in precision and force, and no less in elegance; not an after word, not a word of surplusage, or a word to be bettered in revisal; and the like is true of the closely knit argument."

This picture, drawn with a bold hand, greatly amused the home circle in Willow Street. But then, we had not heard the speech!

Charlotte Cushman.

CHAPTER XXXV

GORDON and I had the privilege of seeing Charlotte Cushman when, no longer able to act in the plays in which she had so distinguished herself, she gave a reading at one of the large halls in New York. She was infirm, less from age than a malady which was consuming her. I found an immense audience assembled in her honor. There were no more seats, no more standing room. She had no assistants, no support. A chair behind a small table was all the *mise en scène*, and here, dressed in a matronly gown of black silk and lace, the great tragedienne seated herself. Her gray hair was rolled back *à la Pompadour* from her broad, high forehead, and beneath black brows her eye kindled as she glanced over the fine audience. As she described it afterward, " a modest farewell reading blossomed into a brilliant testimonial."

After our enthusiastic response to her graceful greeting, she said simply: " Ladies and gentlemen, I shall read — I trust for your pleasure, surely for mine," laying her hand upon her heart — " from the second scene in the third act of 'Henry the Eighth.'"

It so happened there had been, incident upon her appearance, a remarkable discussion in some of the journals of the day. The wise ones, the elect, had paused in their speculations as to the authorship of

Shakespeare's plays, or the Letters of Junius, or the enlightenment of the nations by certain rearrangement of periods in Hamlet's immortal soliloquy, and had cast an eye of scrutiny upon Wolsey's magnificent monologue. To *nous autres* it seems clear enough as it is — but who are we that we should know the heart hidden under a red robe? They gravely opined that the *king*, not *God*, was meant in the lines, "Had I but served my God with half the zeal," etc. Without doubt Charlotte Cushman was aware of this remarkable discussion. A good many backs were straightened to "attention" as she reached the noble words: —

> ". . . O Cromwell, Cromwell!
> Had I but served my God with half the zeal
> I served my king, HE would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies."

She pointed upward as she uttered reverently the word "HE."

From this, after a brief pause — she did not leave her seat all evening — she passed to "Much Ado about Nothing." Never was there such a Dogberry, bursting with arrogance and ignorance. Mrs. Maloney, on the Chinese question, followed, dismissing, with inimitable impudence, the mistress who had just shown her the door. Then she became the loyal, spirited, wildly sweet Kentucky girl and her blue-grass horse, Kentucky Belle, — utterly charming, both of them, — concluding with "Molly Carew." In this she was tremendous. The policemen at the door came in to listen; the applause was loud and long. "Molly Carew," forsooth! What is there in "Molly Carew"? What in the entreaty to take off her bonnet lest she cost her lover, as he declares, "the loss of me wanderin' soul," to bring down the house? What in the indignant summing up that she had better be careful; "you'll feel mighty queer when you see me weddin' mairching down the street an' yersilf not in it"?

I soon found out how much there was in Molly Carew *per se*, with no Charlotte Cushman to interpret! I happened to have Samuel Lover's poems, and when I reached home, I took the book from the library shelves and summoned the children to listen to the funniest thing they had ever heard in all their lives. "I warn you," said I, "you'll half kill yourselves laughing."

I read "Molly Carew." Round eyes opened wider in astonishment as I proceeded. There was not a smile; not the faintest glimmer of mirth. Dead silence was broken by a polite "Is that all? Thank you, mamma," as they escaped. Oh, genius, gift of the gods! Who can measure it? Who, not born to it, can hope to win it! Who can attain even a far-away imitation of it! How it can clothe and glorify the simplest ideas! How it transfigured Charlotte Cushman — haggard and gray from keen physical suffering, knowing well that her hour was at hand! What noble restraint in her selections, ignoring pain and sorrow, denying herself the tribute of sympathy, bidding us good night with a smile on her lips and words demanding an answering smile on ours!

To remember Charlotte Cushman is to recall Madame Helena Modjeska — totally different, certainly not inferior. I met her in society in New York. Her beautiful face, her tender, sensitive mouth, and the "far-away look of her eyes, as though she were thinking of the wrongs of Poland," are never to be forgotten. And the splendor of her genius! I saw her as Ophelia to Edwin Booth's Hamlet. "You are as good as a Greek chorus, my lord," — she in a Savonarola chair, he on a *fauteuil* at her feet. I saw her also as Queen Catherine. I think she impressed all who knew her as a most sad woman. But is not melancholy the prerogative of genius? I, for one, never knew a man or woman of genius, real genius, who was merry. Madame Modjeska made melancholy beautiful.

She was once the guest of a lady who had gathered together a number of choice spirits in her honor. One of them, forgotten of her good angel, asked, "How do you like our country, madame!"

"Oh," spreading out her hands to signify empty space, and speaking in a weary tone, "Oh! It is *all* — *all* one great level."

"Ah, but," said her hostess, "patience! I shall introduce you by and by to a little hill."

An introduction followed, and at the close of the evening Madame Modjeska, pressing the hand of her hostess at parting, said with feeling: —

"Ah, madame! *She* was one great mountain!"

Before the war which cut me off from every pleasure demanding leisure and a little money, I heard the elder Booth in "Hamlet" — and I must

HELENA MODJESKA.

confess he was rather a wheezy Hamlet in his old age. In Brooklyn the circumstances of my life forbade my indulging my passion for music and the enjoyment of a good play, but we had tickets for gallery seats to see Edwin Booth when Madame Modjeska played with him. Afterward we saw him in "The Fool's Revenge," and I remember being quite carried away and oblivious of everything except his splendid acting, until the calm voice of my son recalled me, "Don't you think, mamma, you had better sit down?" I spent a summer at Narragansett in the same hotel with Mr. Booth when he was resting his weary brain. He had a hooded chair placed in a corner of a veranda overlooking the sea, and there alone and in silence he spent most of his time. His devoted daughter ministered to him and carefully protected him from intrusion. At certain conditions of the tide the sands of the Narragansett beach emit a weird, faint, singing sound as the waves recede from them, — moaning, as it were, because they are left behind. These sounds could not be heard by every ear. Some eager listeners never could hear them. I used to wonder if Edwin Booth did, and wish I could ask him what they said to him. I might even tell him what they said to me! But his "Edwina" watched him jealously, and we respected his evident prostration of mind and spirit. His place at table was near mine. A moonlight smile would steal over his face when his two grandchildren, rosy little tots, came to him at dessert for a bit of sweet from the hand whose slightest gesture had once been able to move a multitude. The next time he was brought vividly before us we were in a great assembly of his friends, listening to Mr. Parke Godwin, — his friend and ours, — as he told of the sun whose rise, whose splendid noon, and whose setting we were ever to remember.

In the autumn of 1882 our old Southern friend, General R. D. Lilley, visited New York in the interests of Washington and Lee University. Colonel Mapleson, with Adelina Patti, Nicolini, and the famous *danseuse*, Cavalassi, had just arrived for a brilliant season at the Metropolitan Opera House. General Lilley sent me a letter from Colonel Mapleson, — which lies before me, — in which he offered "a grand entertainment to be given about the 3d of March for the endowment of scholarships in Washington and Lee University, in which entertainment the leading artists of the opera would appear," and asked for a committee of ladies to act in concert with him.

General Lilley was in a quandary. He knew no New York ladies. No more did I. But finally he won his way into the good graces of the widow of Governor Dix and mother of the Rev. Morgan Dix, who granted her drawing-room for our meetings, and doubtless consulted her own visiting list to find patronesses. When, at the general's earnest prayer, I went over to the first meeting, I found a noble band of women all enthusiasm over the project. I was a stranger in New York, and but dimly recognized the names on the committee with my own: Mrs. John Dix, Mrs. August Belmont, Mrs. William M. Evarts, Mrs. Francis R. Rives, Mrs.

John Jay, Mrs. (Commodore) Vanderbilt, Mrs. Vincenzo Botta, Mrs. Henry Clews, Mrs. James Brown Potter, Mrs. Winfield S. Hancock, and others, about fifty in all! I can now easily understand that this committee had but to *will* a thing, and if it were not accomplished, the fault would not lie in their lack of potentiality. They had but to say the word. Means, overflowing means, and generous patronage would be assured.

Colonel Mapleson met with us at our meetings, which Mrs. Dix made delightful. We had animated discussions over Mrs. Dix's tea-cups, and adopted fine resolutions. Patti, the colonel assured us, would sing, — certainly, — but she needed a vast deal of coaxing and mock entreaty. Then every day Nicolini — whom she had recently married — wrote us a letter presenting some difficulty which we must settle. The flowers we ordered were beyond compare — to Arditi, the orchestra leader, a large music scroll in white flowers, and upon this ground the first bars of his "Il bacio" in blue violets. To the witch Cavalassi we voted a floral slipper, to Colonel Mapleson a silken banner of Stars and Stripes. What, alas! could we do for Patti? Could *any*thing be enough? At last we sent for Colonel Mapleson. "Ladies," he said, "this will be your easiest task. Come to the opera-house with bouquets in your hands or corsage, tied with cords you have taken from your fans, and throw them to her, impulsively. There's nothing she so dotes on as to run all over the stage and pick up flowers, affect intense surprise at each new bouquet, press them to her heart, and be utterly overcome at last as she runs away."

All this was done, I learned, for I was not there to see! Colonel Mapleson, however, did not forget me. He sent me the monogram cut in gold of Washington and Lee University, and I often wear it as a souvenir of my charming hours with good Mrs. Dix and her friends.

When I came to the city to live, I found that Dr. Dix, his lovely mother, and many of the ladies of our committee still remembered me. This was not the last time we were together in a benevolent enterprise, nor the last time Patti honored me. Childish as were the little arts attributed to her by Colonel Mapleson, she could give evidence of a big warm heart on occasion!

CHAPTER XXXVI

IN 1877 the leading citizens of Brooklyn invited General Pryor to deliver an address at the Academy of Music on Decoration Day. This was an opportunity he had long desired, and the invitation was eagerly accepted. With great zeal and bitterness some of the veterans of the Grand Army resented the invitation, upon which my husband promptly declined the honor. I do not give the names of the old soldiers — they have long ago been forgiven and are fully understood. A heated correspondence followed — one side generous, fraternal feeling, on the other the bleeding afresh of old, unhealed wounds. Finally, the general, — although the charm, the grace, of the compliment was all gone, — perceiving it would be childish and ungrateful to persist in declining to speak, consented.

The interesting nature of the occasion, and the conflict it had aroused, drew a very great audience to the Academy of Music. My husband never needed notes in speaking, but this time Gordon, in a very large, clear hand, wrote out his address that he might refresh, if necessary, his memory.

It was not necessary. He was full of fire and enthusiasm, and nobly gave the noble sentiments eagerly quoted next day by the *New York Tribune.* The closing paragraph strikes no uncertain note. It must have surprised his audience: —

"From the vantage ground of a larger observation, with a more calm and considerable meditation on the causes and conditions of national prosperity, I, for one, cannot resist the conclusion that, after all, Providence wisely ordered the event, and that it is well for the South itself that it was disappointed in its endeavor to establish a separate government. Plain is it that, if once established, such a government could not have long endured. It was founded on principles that must have proved its downfall. It must soon have fallen a victim to foreign aggression or domestic anarchy. Nor to the reëstablishment of the Union is the Confederate soldier any the less reconciled by the destruction of slavery. People of the North, history will record that slavery fell, not by any efforts of man's will, but by the immediate intervention and act of the Almighty Himself. And in the anthem of praise ascending to heaven for the emancipation of four million human beings, the voice of the Confederate soldier mingles its note of devout gratulation. And now in the unconquerable strength of freedom we may hope that the existence of our blessed Union is limited only by the mortality that measures the duration of all human institutions. [*Prolonged applause.*]" — *Tribune*, May 31.

"General Roger A. Pryor's Decoration Day address wins golden opinions. It was brave, patriotic, and statesmanlike. He grasps the situation. He does not take much stock in bygones, thinks gravestones are made to leave behind and not to tie to, and would rather have a live man with average common sense than the biggest obituary that was ever written. General Pryor is one of the few men who have a to-morrow." — *Evening Express*, June 12.

The *Springfield Republican*, May 31, says: —

"The Grand Army fellows who opposed inviting Roger A. Pryor to deliver the address at Brooklyn yesterday probably feel pretty well ashamed of themselves by this time. Certainly they would have deprived the country of a very desirable speech if they had succeeded in preventing his speaking."

Broad as were the views of the ex-rebel at this time, the Southern papers indorsed him : —

"General Roger A. Pryor's address on Decoration Day, at Brooklyn, New York, is quite remarkable. It is very brilliant and very eloquent. There is logic, but it is 'logic on fire,' as Macaulay said of Lord Chatham. There is a magnificent sweep in the sentences, and high and patriotic thought throughout. It reminds us in its glow and passion, in its rich and flowing rhetoric, and in its exquisite diction of Edmund Burke's tremendous speech on the 'Nabob of Arcot's Debts.' We do not think any man can accompany the orator, with his kindling, intense periods and sonorous, ornate style, with his lofty thought and impassioned eloquence, without a responsive thrill of emotion and a feeling of pride that this master of speech is a Southron."

— *Wilmington* (N.C.) *Star.*

"The address of General Roger A. Pryor delivered on Decoration Day at Brooklyn, N.Y., is a brilliant production. Like everything emanating from him, it is full of fine thought and fine sentiment, with a sweeping array of glowing genius, all clothed in a diction simple, pure, and as opposite as if the idea and language had been born together from a brain entirely original and independent in its conceptions. The spirit of the address, too, is national, catholic, patriotic, and grandly American from beginning to end.

"Pryor is a man of splendid parts, and Virginia has reason to be proud of him." — (Richmond, Va.)

The *Richmond Whig* paid a handsome tribute:—

"Roger A. Pryor is a man of resplendent genius. He has high culture, too, and he is far from being only an orator to excite the passions, to win applause, and to elicit admiration. He has comprehensiveness of brain, coupled with an extraordinary capacity for the nicest dialectics. As a writer or speaker, he should be invited to no second seat anywhere. He is more like William Wirt, perhaps, than any other of the gifted men of this country. And the day is not distant when, if he goes into politics again, he will have a national name as familiar to the North as, when he was a much younger man, it was to the Southern people.

"We have no doubt he will deliver a speech of unsurpassed beauty and eloquence on Decoration Day in Brooklyn."

These are but representative quotations. The whole country was ready to applaud the speech. It was a fitting close to the first twelve years of our life of trial and probation. The sweetest praise of all came in a letter from America's great preacher, Richard S. Storrs:—

"80 Pierpont Street,
"Brooklyn, N.Y.,
"May 31, 1877.

"My dear General Pryor:—

"I have read with the very greatest satisfaction and pleasure your admirable address of last evening. I sympathize, in fullest measure, with the delighted enthusiasm with which my wife and daughter spoke of the address after hearing it last evening, and am only more sorry than before that my unlucky and imperative engagement with the Historical Society Committee and Board forbade me to enjoy the splendid eloquence of utterance which they described to me.

GENERAL HANCOCK.

I do not see how you could possibly have treated the theme which the occasion presented more delicately or more grandly — with a finer touch, or a more complete mastery of all its proper relations and suggestions.

"It is a great address, and must have a wide and great effect. I only wish that all the papers would give it in its full extent.

"I am faithfully and with great regard,

"Yours,

"R. S. Storrs."

This address, which has been handsomely bound by the Brooklyn committee, was followed by invitations all over the country to speak — even from the Gospel Tent. But, unhappily, honor does not fill the basket, nor warm the body, nor pay the rent, nor satisfy the tax-gatherer. It is a nice, nice thing to have, — there's no use denying it, — but I think my dear general would have given it all, every bit, for one good, remunerative law case.

Firmly fortified, as he persuaded himself, against ever again indulging in the fascinations of politics, his admiration for his old foe at Sharpsburg drew him into the Hancock campaign.

General Hancock, the hero of Gettysburg and Antietam, was worth every effort of every Democrat in the country. He was a superb man in every respect, and we soon became his ardent friends. His wife was a most dear, beautiful woman, whom I learned to love. So charming was their simple home on Governors Island, I could have brought myself to the point of begging the government — that had taken so much from me — to grant me a little corner to live near them and their two delightful friends, General James Fry and his wife.

At General Hancock's I spent much time, and while my general consulted with him on political matters, Mrs. Hancock and I would, when we could escape from the crowd, sympathize with each other as only stricken mothers can sympathize. She had just lost her beautiful Ada — and small indeed seemed the honors of this world to her.

My general made a fine speech for General Hancock, which was praised by the press as generously as the Decoration Day speech. It was understood that he would be Attorney-General in case of Hancock's election. We know the result; and I must confess that as the election returns were reported to us, I quite abandoned myself to disappointment. From my window next morning I could see another Democratic mourner, and in order to signal to her my state of mind, I hung a black shawl which I had on at the moment out of the window. Early on the day after the election I went with my daughter Gordon across the ferry to Governor's Island to assure myself of the welfare of my friends. It was a raw day in November, and snow was falling. We were the only passengers on the boat, with the exception of two serious-looking women who carried a large paper box between them. "Funeral flowers," suggested Gordon. Upon arriving, we walked up to General Hancock's house, and at the door perceived our fellow-passengers had followed us. They entered with us, and in order to give them the right of way in case they were come on appointment, Gordon and I passed on to the back parlor, leaving them in the front room. Presently we heard General Hancock accost them courteously, whereupon they arose and explained, with much solemnity, their errand. " General, for some time past we have been engaged in preparing a testimonial for you, with the assistance of your many admirers. Here, sir, is an autograph quilt," — unfolding an ample and fearful object, — " and upon it there are autographs of our celebrated men: General Grant is here, Mr. Hayes is here, Mr. Garfield is here!" — General Hancock interrupted, " But — ladies! Thanking you for your kindness, let me inform you I have been defeated — your offering was probably designed for the elected President." With warm vehemence they both protested: " Oh, *no*, *no*, General! We are Democrats! No, *sir!* No Republican is ever going to sleep under *this* quilt if we can help it!" " Ah, well, then," said the general, " I suppose I can do nothing more than thank you. Yes, I can call Mrs. Hancock. She will say how much we appreciate your kindness."

Passing through the back parlor, he espied us. " Oh, Mrs. Pryor! *Hang it all!*" he ruefully exclaimed, as he went aloft. When Mrs. Hancock took charge of the situation, he returned to us.

" And so the general has sent you over to represent him at the funeral! Tell him I am all right; but by the bye, how many people came over with you?"

" Those two," indicating the party now descanting to Mrs. Hancock upon the fine collection of autographs.

"Had the result been different, a fleet could not have brought them all! However, the canes are coming in as well as the quilts. We shall not lack for fire-wood this winter, nor for covering."

Mrs. Hancock was soon relieved of her kind friends, and both she and the general accompanied us on a "little walk" proposed by him. "I shall not be lonely here," he told us; "a new ship comes in sight every day; and I've plenty to do. I must have all these leaves swept up, too. I'm a happier man than Garfield this day. Only," he added sadly, "I cannot reward my friends."

Mrs. Hancock opened the gate of her little garden and gathered a souvenir posy for Gordon, and so we parted from the two — so great, so dignified in the hour of defeat.

When I reached home, it was well I had a *douceur* for my general. He held in his hand the *New York Tribune* of the day, and pointed an indignant finger to a communication in which the public was warned against the incendiary principles of "persons in the family of a noted Southern lawyer, now resident on Brooklyn Heights, who had, in the moment of the nation's rejoicing, displayed in a window a piratical flag, deep-bordered and ominous." My poor little jest with my neighbor! My humble black shawl!

Having had an invitation to lunch with Mrs. Grant at the Fifth Avenue Hotel next day, I thought it wise, as well as agreeable, to accept, seeing I had been published as a suspicious character. I needed Republican support.

I told Mrs. Grant of my interview with General Hancock. "Nice fellow! Nice fellow!" she exclaimed with feeling. "You know I'm a Democrat," she said. "What's more, I'm *Secesh*, particularly as the Republicans wouldn't nominate Ulysses for a third term."

"Oh, but," said I, "you mustn't forget the story of the Fisherman and the Flounder."

She had never heard the story of Dame Isabel, the fisherman's ambitious wife, and laughed heartily over the application to herself. "All the same," she protested, "I was not unreasonable — I didn't wish to be Lord of the spheres — only wife of the President of one country."

A short time before this the (Massachusetts) *Springfield Republican* was kind enough to lend a helping hand, in the guise of a kind word to my dear general, which was quoted by the *New York Times*, January 22, 1878. That I should have preserved it so many years, fully asserts my appreciation of the paper's kindness.

> "The New York correspondent of the *Springfield* (Massachusetts) *Republican* writes: 'Roger Pryor is pegging away very quietly in his law office, with increasing business, though it is not of a very conspicuous character nor very remunerative, I imagine, for he does a great deal of work for poor people; but he sticks so closely to his business that comparatively few people know that he is here, and one of the most characteristic representatives of the Southern statesman. He is in constant communication with leading Southern men, and knows the true inwardness of the Southern feeling and policy in regard to "scaling" the state debts.

He is an intense anti-rupudiationist, and the very thought of a thing so dishonorable makes him shiver with rage. But he is fully persuaded that the Southern people are determined to cut down their obligations materially, and throw overboard the carpet-bag debts altogether, if possible. He thinks that when the federal government required the Southern people to repudiate their Confederate war debts, it taught them a lesson in repudiation which they are now disposed to better. The public men of the South have not done their duty in frowning down this feeling and teaching the people a better policy, to say nothing of honesty. Pryor is the soul of honor, is chock full of the old-fashioned Virginia chivalric sentiment, and altogether too high-minded and large-thoughted to mix himself with our local politics. And all the democrats who know him and are not politicians agree that he ought to be in Congress.' "

He was ardently opposed to repudiation, and has often expressed indignation that the South was required to repudiate its Confederate war debts. As to his being in Congress, he was offered a few years later the nomination by Tammany, which would have meant sure election — but how could he pay the assessment demanded by that organization? Because he could not, he was compelled to decline the honor of going back to his old seat from the state of his adoption.

Mrs. Grant did me the honor to invite me to a reception she was giving " to meet General and Mrs. Sheridan." " Of course you'll not go," my husband suggested. " How can you meet General Sheridan ? " " Why not ? " I said. " If he can stand it, I can."

General Sheridan.

When Mrs. Grant presented me, the little general — he was shorter than I — was at first too much astonished for speech. He had hardly supposed when he parted from me in the house where, in order that he might escape annoyance, I had been kept by him literally in durance vile, that our next meeting would be in the drawing-rooms of the wife of his commander. I gave him time to realize all this, and then I asked him gently, " Do you remember me, General Sheridan ? "

In a moment both hands grasped mine. "Indeed, indeed I do, dear lady — and I am grateful to Mrs. Grant for giving me this opportunity to tell you that no man in this country more cordially rejoices at General Pryor's success than I do." He then recalled Lucy, and bantered her on having grown "taller than General Sheridan." But the crowd pressed in, and there was no time for more reminiscences of those terrible ten days in Petersburg. Mrs. Grant called to W. W. Story and bade him take care of me. " She has never seen Ulysse ! " she exclaimed. " Keep her until six o'clock. He promised me to come then." Mr. Story, with his beautiful classic face, — nobodycould be as charming, — found a great many delightful things to say to us, and when our hostess claimed us, General Grant having arrived, he gallantly laid his hand upon his heart and said : " I shall not forget you ! You and your daughter are photographed here."

Although I had visited Mrs. Grant, I had never seen the general. True, I had received many emphatic messages from him, but he had then required no answer. I began to wonder what I should find to say to him — to plan something very gentle and pleasing in return for his fire and brimstone. I remembered that he had once told one of my friends that he often regretted he had never studied medicine instead of military tactics. Clearly, if it could be brought about by a little skilful management, no more fitting response to the sulphurous remarks he had made to me at Petersburg could be imagined than something akin to the healing art.

"This is Ulysse, Mrs. Pryor," said Mrs. Grant, and my hour had come. He stood silent, throwing, after the manner of men, the burden of conversation upon the woman before him. Every idea forsook me! I did not, like Heine in the presence of Goethe, remark upon the excellent flavor of the plums at Jena, but I found nothing better to say than "How is it, General, that you permit Mrs. Grant to call you Ulysse?"

"Perhaps from imitation," he replied; "I know a general whose wife calls him Roger."

He was so simple, so kind, that everything went easily after this. I could not stifle the recollection of all I had suffered at his hands, but I had something for which to thank him. We had been invited to accompany him in his private car when he went to Hartford to attend the second marriage of Mr. John Russell Young. All my life I have been so malapropos as to welcome with tears the bride coming to take the place of a wife whom I had loved, and this time the tears had been on the wedding day so abundant

I was in no condition to go with General Grant. My youngest school-girl daughter took my place. At every stop on the road crowds collected to see General Grant, and, with my Fanny on his arm, he went out on the platform to return the greeting. Now I could tell him of her pride in the occasion. "The pride was all mine," he said; "an old fellow with such a beautiful girl on his arm had something to be proud of."

"There's a very beautiful girl near us," I said to Mrs. Grant, "the dark-eyed lady in rose moire."

"Why, that's Fred's wife," she answered. "Yes, she is beautiful, and we are all proud of her;" adding, with a humorous expression, "It has always been hard for me — this admiration of beauty."

"Do you not care for beauty?" I asked. "Care for it? I worship it! I used to cry when I was a little girl because I was so ugly. 'Never mind, Julia,' my dear mother would say, 'you can be my good little girl.' I used to wish I could ever once be called her 'pretty little girl.'"

But no face as thoroughly kind and good as hers can ever be plain. After all, is it ever the prettiest faces that are nearest our hearts? Having known Mrs. Grant for many years, I can truly say I have seen no woman so free from ostentation or affectation. Kindness of heart, genuine, sincere desire to make others happy, patience in adversity, — these are the traits of mind, manner, and heart that won for her so many warm friends. No other American woman has ever been so much fêted and honored as she. Most of us have had our little hour — a part of the world we live in has at one time or another turned upon us eyes of applauding affection, but she stood beside her husband at every foreign court in Europe, presiding on occasions when he held private audience with the greatest potentates of the world. Nothing seemed to mar her perfect simplicity — her admirable self-forgetfulness. I was engaged one day in taking a frugal luncheon — tea, toast, a dozen oysters — in my tiny basement dining-room, when Mrs. Grant's card was handed me.

Running upstairs and saying to my daughter, "Mrs. Grant must have a cup of tea," I was surprised to find the general seated near the door. After the greeting, he said gravely, "I don't see why I can't have a cup of tea as well as Mrs. Grant."

"I will send it to you, General! The doorway on the stair is too low for you to go down."

"It must be pretty low," he replied; "I've a mind to try it. I've stooped my head for less."

We divided the dozen oysters among us, brewed more tea, made more toast and enjoyed the meal — the general inquiring kindly of news from my husband, who was in England, having been sent by the Irish-Americans to see what could be done for O'Donnell, the Irish prisoner.

After there was no more to be expected at the lunch table, we adjourned to the library and I produced the met bullets my boys had found at Cottage Farm.

He laid it on the palm of his hand and looked at it long and earnestly.

"See, General," I said, "the bullets are welded together so as to form a perfect horseshoe — a charm to keep away witches and evil spirits."

But the general was not interested in amulets, charms, or evil spirits. After regarding it silently for a moment, he remarked: —

"Those are minié balls, shot from rifles of equal caliber. And they met precisely equidistant to a hair. This is very interesting, but it is not the only one in the world. I have seen one other, picked up at Vicksburg. Where was this found, and when?" he asked, as he handed the relic back to me. "At Petersburg, possibly."

"Yes," I answered; "but not when you were shelling the city. It was picked up on our farm after the last fight."

He looked at me with a humorous twinkle in his eye. "Now look here," he said, "don't you go about telling people I shelled Petersburg."

A short time before his death, just before he was taken to Mount McGregor, he dictated a note to me, sending his kind regards to my general, and saying he remembered with pleasure his talk with me over a cup of tea.

There is something very touching in all this as I remember it now — his illness so bravely borne. His death occurred not very long afterward. No widow ever mourned more tenderly than did Mrs. Grant. I saw her only once before she went to sleep beside him in the marble temple on the riverside, and she touched me by her patient demeanor. I had a friend very close to her in her later days to whom she loved to talk of her general, — when they met, how he proposed to her. They were riding together, crossing a rough place in the road. Her horse stumbled and threw her. The general caught her in his arms and said he was "glad to safeguard her then, and would be proud to do so to the end." She said when he came on his wooing there were members of her family who looked askance at the undersized chap. "Nothing of him but eyes and epaulets," Longstreet was quoted as saying of him one evening at a tea-and-toast euchre party. This seems to have been the opinion of some of Julia Dent's people, but not of her far-seeing mother, to whom the maiden's dismay was confided. "Julia, you should marry that young officer, say what they will about his clumsiness and awkward ways! He is far above any of the young fellows who come here. He will one day be President of the United States."

My sisters at the South would, in these early days, have resented these words of appreciation of General and Mrs. Grant. Not one iota the less did my allegiance fail to *my* dear commander in his modest tomb, guarded perpetually night and day by a son of Virginia, because I could perceive the tender side, the heroic side, of a foeman worthy of his steel.

CHAPTER XXXVII

IN October, 1883, General Pryor was sent to England, as counsel to defend Patrick O'Donnell, who had been indicted for the murder of James Carey, and was now imprisoned in London. Carey had been one of the leaders of the Irish "Invincibles" in 1881, and was an accomplice in the assassination of Mr. T. H. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish in Phœnix Park. He was arrested on January 13, 1883, and turned queen's evidence. In order to escape the vengeance of the "Invincibles," he was secretly shipped for the Cape under the name of "Power." His plan of escape was discovered, and he was secretly followed by Patrick O'Donnell, who shot him before the vessel reached its destination.

The prisoner was an American citizen, and it was thought proper by some of his personal friends to have American counsel assist the local lawyers in his defence. There was no political signification in General Pryor's being retained. He was aware that objection would be urged against his appearance in an English court. There was no precedent for his encouragement. The case of Judah P. Benjamin did not apply. Mr. Benjamin had been born a British subject and had "eaten his dinners" at the Temple. Only by an act of courtesy on the part of the judge could General Pryor hope for a hearing. He wrote me, *en route*, on board the *Scythia*, October 17: —

> "An Irish barrister on board has been my most constant companion, — a very intelligent gentleman is he, — and I am assured by him that I cannot be admitted to appear in Court, the rule of Court excluding from practice any but members of the Bar. This does not surprise me. I can be usefully employed in consultation and suggestion. I have industriously read in the law of homicide, and on those topics I consider myself an expert."

Meanwhile the newspapers were interested in the novel experiment of sending an American lawyer to defend an American citizen in England, and searching for some hidden reason for the selection of General Pryor. "Simply because of his daring spirit," said one. "He will speak out as another would hesitate to speak." "Not so," said the editor of the *Irish World;* "General Pryor was selected on account of his ability as a lawyer. I know of no man who can better represent the American bar. O'Donnell is an American citizen, and General Pryor will defend him as an American citizen." A would-be wit in England replied, "He was selected because he was *prior* to all others — take notice — *this is registered*."

The *New York Times*, November 8, 1883, reminds the public that "an English barrister would have no standing in an American court, except by a stretch of courtesy which would be rather violent. To give audience in court to a foreign counsel would be a great novelty in any country."

The *London Times* commented on the matter and said, "It is probable that Mr. Pryor will be permitted to give the accused man all possible assistance short of taking a public part in the conduct of the case." Chief Justice Coleridge, recently returned from this country, where he had been the recipient of many kindly courtesies, was at once interested, and took an early opportunity to consult leading English jurists regarding certain amendments in the form of procedure in the courts, the admission of foreign lawyers being one of the points discussed. A correspondent of the *Brooklyn Eagle* visited my husband in England and wrote to the paper: —

> "I called on General Pryor this morning. He is snugly housed at the Craven Hotel in Craven Street, hard by Charing Cross and within a minute's walk of the American Exchange. I found him immersed in papers relating to the case, but with sufficient leisure to greet a fellow-countryman (and an old client *en passant*) with his customary courtesy.
>
> "Legally, the general has had a hard time of it here, — of which more anon, — but socially he has been the recipient of extraordinary marks of English favor. His romantic career as a soldier and as a lawyer is known to everybody, and invitations to club breakfasts and the dinner-tables of great men have poured in upon him. So far, he has accepted none of these, having been entirely preoccupied by the preparation of O'Donnell's defence, which, as I understand from other sources, is largely General Pryor's. Originally it was understood that the trial should occur in October, but it has been postponed again and again, and the general's great regret is that he was not able to get back to vote.
>
> "Speaking to me on this subject to-day, a prominent

member of the English bar said: ‘My dear fellow, General Pryor is not an exception to the rule. He is simply a prominent instance of its operation. You may not be aware that neither a Scotch nor an Irish barrister is allowed to plead in English courts. If we were to make any exception at all, it would certainly be made in favor of General Pryor, who is known to and liked by us all.’

“‘But,’ I asked, ‘how about his appearance in court as a matter of courtesy?’

“‘There is no such thing possible, and not even the judge has power to extend it. The Benchers of the Inns are the authority, and even the objection of a single barrister would be fatal.’”

The English papers were, as a class, against his appearance. The *St. James Gazette* had long articles on the subject, in one of which the question is thus settled: —

“The case of American counsel claiming audience in a criminal trial arousing passionate political interest in certain circles is admirably calculated to demonstrate the excellence of the rule which the Irish-Americans were anxious to have broken, — as they supposed in their interests. The only motive which O'Donnell could have for wishing (if he does wish it) to be heard through foreign counsel would be that that counsel should say or do something which English counsel cannot say or do. For, however great General Pryor's fame may be in his own country, we have no reason to suppose that he is gifted with eloquence or persuasive powers so remarkable that he might be relied upon to move the hearts of an Old Bailey jury impervious to the tried abilities of Mr. Charles Russell and the earnest fluency of Mr. A. M. Sullivan. Let us consider, then, what it is which these gentlemen could not do, and General

Pryor, if he got the chance, could do. The principal thing is that he could more or less defy the judge, and instigate the jury to override the law or take a wrong view of the evidence."

The *Gazette* little knew the manner of man under discussion. "Defy the law," indeed! He wrote me October 25: —

"As I have informed you, a rule of the Bar excludes any but an English barrister from appearing professionally in the courts. I will not allow a motion to be made that I be heard in the case, for I do not choose to solicit a favor, nor to incur the hazard of a rebuff, nor to expose the American Bar to the incivility which would be involved in rejecting such an application from one of its members. My presence, however, is not without good effect, nor have my services been unimportant. Indeed, I may say to you that already I have rendered inestimable service to my client."

Meanwhile Sir Charles Russell, afterward Lord Chief Justice of England, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Guy, of the British bar, and Roger A. Pryor, of the American bar, worked faithfully, earnestly, and zealously, step by step, for the unfortunate prisoner. O'Donnell was a poor, ignorant man, who could not write his own name. In this country he had been a teamster in the Federal army during the Civil War. For a long time his countryman who had come so far to help him was not allowed to see him. Finally, this much was granted — and of great comfort to the doomed man were the sympathetic visits of my tender-hearted husband. His trial ended as everybody knew it must.

General Pryor felt keenly the embarrassment of his position, but before he left England nearly every club was open to him, and many dinners given in his honor by Lord Russell, members of the bar, Mr. Justin McCarthy and other literary men in London.

"At the royal geographical dinner," he writes, "I sat beside Lord Houghton, and opposite Lord Aberdeen, with both of whom I had pleasant talk. Other eminent men were there. Invitations followed which I must decline, infinitely to my regret, but I cannot neglect the business on which I came. A dinner is offered me in Dublin. Last evening, however, I was glad to dine with Charles Russell, Q.C., and Sunday I drive with him to Richmond. He pays me every possible attention, and I can see relies upon me in the conduct of the case. I live as retired as possible. My clients cannot suspect me of yielding to British blandishments! I have had interesting interviews with my poor client, in compliance with his urgent entreaty. He was very grateful to me and cheered by my presence."

He received marked kindness from Dr. Rae, the Arctic explorer, who had made important discoveries in King William's Land and found traces of Sir John Franklin; also in 1864 had made a telegraphic survey across the Rocky Mountains. Dr. Rae gave several delightful dinners to my husband, inviting him to meet Huxley, Sir John Lubbock, and sundry notable chemists and inventors. "Come to us Saturday at half-past seven," he wrote from Kensington, "a handsome [*sic*] should bring you in a little over half an hour if the beast is good." At Dr. Rae's he met Mathilde Blind, "a brilliant woman, a Jewess;

and Justin McCarthy, a shy, silent man, spectacled and quite like a professor." Dining at the Café Royal, "who should come in and sit opposite to us but the Baroness Burdett-Coutts and her spouse. She is surprisingly juvenile in appearance—not at all as she has been represented. Her voice is quite girlish, and she moves with wonderful agility," etc.

He also met Miss Shaw, who was conducting a bevy of American girls for a tour of European travel. Some *contretemps* arose which made her grateful for his conduct and assistance. The particular young lady whom he had the honor of escorting and assisting was Miss Stanton. It suddenly occurred to him that this might be the daughter of his old enemy, Edwin M. Stanton. The young lady innocently answered his question affirmatively. She had been the identical baby girl that, eighteen years before, Stanton had held in his arms as he declared, "Pryor shall be hanged!" My general might have done several things: he might have left her alone in a London street to the mercy of ruffians; he might have used, in a dark corner, the tiny pistol he carried; he might have drowned her in the Thames; he might have surprised her by increased devotion and care for her comfort. He chose the last, heaping coals of fire upon her unconscious head!

Before he returned he visited places peculiarly interesting to him as a scholar, all of which he described to me charmingly. As far as in him lay he trod the paths, so sacred to him, once trod by the lumbering feet of the one Englishman he adores above all others, Dr. Sam Johnson: sitting at the desk where he wrote his dictionary and marvelling at the meanness of the desk, looking out of his windows, walking with him and with Boswell along the familiar streets. He also stood on the spot where Blackstone delivered his immortal lectures, and on the very spot where Latimer and Cranmer suffered, — the students at that moment playing near it a vigorous game of football, — all this, and much more, so natural in a scholar visiting for the first time the London of which he knew every spot haunted by the great spirits of the literary world.

After he returned home, he received a long letter from Lord Russell, telling him that he (Russell) had been sharply criticised for the conduct of O'Donnell's case, and accused of having managed it in a negligent and lukewarm manner. He wished his American colleague's candid opinion on the subject, and also requested his photograph, adding, "I am sending you mine."

General Pryor answered him cordially and was glad he could say, "I consider that you defended O'Donnell with the utmost zeal and enthusiasm, and with consummate skill!" It seems the queen's counsel was sensitive as well as able. He was afterwards made Lord Chief Justice of England.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE circle that finally gathered around the fireside in the little library at 157 Willow Street was long remembered by some of the men who made it brilliant. John G. Saxe, whom we had known in Washington, was one of these men. Thither also came the Southern author, William Gilmore Simms. I remember one evening spent in our tiny library with Mr. Simms, John R. Thompson, and General Charles Jones, when the trio of literary men told stories, — not war stories, — ghost stories. Mr. Thompson recalled a ghost I had known of myself and feared when a child, — the ghost of the University of Virginia that announced its coming by a sudden wind bursting open the doors, passed through the room, and walked off across the lawn to the mountains. His deep foot-tracks could be discerned in the soft sod, and with snow on the ground these deep tracks could be seen to grow under his invisible feet as he strode onward. Well do I remember nights when this ghost "walked." But General Jones had a better story. His was a visible ghost, an old lady, whose contested will he was reading one night, who appeared at the challenged point, looked at him solemnly, and then vanished! Mr. Simms positively declined to mention his own private ghost after these two thrilling visitations.

We had an interesting visit from Percy Greg, son of the English author. Mr. Greg brought as a present to my general the proof-sheets of his father's "Warnings of Cassandra," in which my husband discovered an error; and according to his lifelong belief that all errors in the English language are crimes which must be corrected, he proceeded to enlighten Mr. Greg. "Your father has made a mistake — a slight one — which he can correct in the next edition. He uses the word 'internecine' where he clearly means 'intestine.'" Our guest dropped his under jaw, stared, and reddened. An American correcting an Englishman's English! He had, I know, respect for my husband's courage, but he had not expected rebel guns to be turned on him in this manner.

> "This was a length, I trow,
> A rebel's daring could not go,"

if I may paraphrase Gilbert in the Bab Ballads!

But we had more eminent guests than these, — the divines of the City of Churches, and her learned judges. Foremost and most cordial of all were the old generals of the Grand Army of the Republic: General Hancock, General James Fry, General Slocum, General Grant, General Tracy — a sometime foe in field and forum; and later General Sherman, General Fitz-John Porter, General Butterfield, and General McClellan were added to our list of friends.

Among my husband's earliest clients was General Benjamin F. Butler, who employed him to defend his son-in-law, Hon. Adelbert Ames, when the latter was impeached by the state of Mississippi.

In the families of these distinguished men we soon found friends, and to these were added many others. Brooklyn was noted for its refined and cultivated society, and on Brooklyn Heights many of its most prominent citizens lived, men whose names are not yet forgotten: Professor and Mrs. Eaton, our first and dearest friends; Mr. Abbot Low, — whose splendid monument is the library of Columbia University, — his charming wife and daughters and his accomplished sons, one of whom was late President of Columbia University and mayor of New York; Dr. Henry van Dyke, whose name is famous in two continents as scholar, writer, and orator of high distinction; John Roebling, the brilliant engineer, architect, and builder of the great Brooklyn Bridge, whose beautiful wife was sister of our friend, General Warren; the Hon. S. B. Chittenden and his wife, a grand dame of the old school; the family of our minister to the Court of St. James, Mr. Pierrepont; Mr. and Mrs. Alanson Trask, foremost in all good works; Mr. Henry K. Sheldon, who gave artistic musicals; Mrs. John Bullard, the patroness of art and leader in society; Mr. and Mrs. Allen, who gave a lovely daughter to be the wife of Dr. Holbrook Curtis; Mr. and Mrs. George L. Nichols, with a most dear and charming family of sons and daughters; one known to the world to-day — at home and abroad — as Katrina Trask, the brilliant author, poet, and accomplished chatelaine; Mrs. Alice Morse Earle, now one of America's charming writers; Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton; and Grace Denio Litchfield, then a beautiful young lady, and now a gifted author. These are but a representative few of the interesting men and women who were kind enough to visit us. A multitude of lovely young girls gathered around my school-girl daughters; and when all the army of men turned out on New Year's Day to observe — as they did religiously — the old-time custom of making calls, the little house on Willow Street showed symptoms of bursting!

All of these were Northern people, and many of them from New England, — the New England we had been taught to regard as the stronghold of our enemies. There was not a Southern-born man or woman among them. We had always considered the New Englander upright, narrow, and thorny! Transplanted to Brooklyn, we found him upright indeed, but as harmless as a thornless rose.

Many of these delightful people in time crossed the East River and pitched their tents in New York — and many have crossed the river that flows close to the feet of all of us; and so I imagine society in what is now known as the Borough of Brooklyn has formed new systems revolving around new suns. I sometimes read the old names in the society columns of the Brooklyn journals, and the old pictures rise before me, delightful and never to be forgotten.

The time had now come, however, when it was imperative for General Pryor to live in New York, the city where he had commenced his work and had always kept his office. The first of May found us in a small house on 33d Street.

A letter written by me in the following August gives my opinion of New York as a summer resort.

"My dear Agnes: —

"The colonel declares he means to bring you to New York, and wishes me to give you my own impressions of this place. Well, all I have to say is 'pray that your flight be not in summer!' Anything like the heat and desolation of this town in summer cannot be imagined. Everybody leaves it. I am living in a tiny house in the heart of the city — and a very hard heart it is! On one side of me is the rear of a great hotel, its kitchens and servants' offices overlooking me. Really, I had as soon hear shrieking shells as the clatter they make with their pots and pans. Behind me is a sash and blind factory yielding dust and noise unspeakable. On the other side a dreadful man has planted a garden, wherein he has spread an awning, and there he holds his revels — his card and wine parties. Of course I can but listen to him more than half the stifling hot nights, but should I remonstrate, it is not improbable he might inform me that this is a free country, which I doubt. Lucy and Fanny fortunately are far away in Virginia, and so I am spared the added discomfort of suffering through their nerves.

"This town is as completely metamorphosed in summer as if it had changed places with some struggling, dusty manufacturing city, — building and digging going on everywhere; ugly dirt-carts, instead of flower-crowned ladies in landaus, passing through the dusty streets. You might, perhaps with reason, suggest that I seem to have leisure, — that this is a fine opportunity to read and improve my mind. Yes, I know, but somehow I have lost all desire to improve my mind! My present inclination is to gratify the mind I already have, — go somewhere, see something, hear some really fine music!

"Here there is nothing to be seen except unhappy fellow-mortals panting beneath the burden of city existence; street arabs making free with the front doorstep and improvising tables for their greasy luncheons; pathetic organ-grinders who lift melancholy eyes for recognition and reward, after harrowing the soul with despairing strains — 'Miserere,' 'Ah, I have sighed to rest me,' and such; unmuzzled little animals in mortal terror of the dog-catcher; tired, patient horses who know not their own strength, and quietly obey that other creature with so much less power and so much more selfishness. All this is not cheerful to the looker-out, and having seen it once, I look no more. But I have lately made a discovery. My upper-story window presents an interesting and instructive landscape. There is a low-roofed stable between the hotel and the factory. I can look over a great flat tin roof where snowy garments are always drying, and upon which, like 'Little Dorritt's' lover, I can gaze 'until I 'most think they wuz groves.' Moreover, there is a happy woman who comes up through a trap-door and walks much under the shadow of those groves. How do I know she is happy? Partly by the patter of her busy feet, partly by the bit of song that floats to me 'whiles.' But chiefly because I have actually found out all about her while I have leaned idly out of my window. First, she is very good — this dweller beneath the flat roof.

"On Sunday evenings she tunes up a little melodeon in her regions below, and sings straight through the Moody and Sankey hymn-book. Nor is this all. For a time I could not discover whether she was wife, maid, or mother, and I felt much anxious solicitude in her behalf. But lately she has brought up to the roof in the evenings a small rocking-chair of the Mayflower pattern, some crochet or tatting; and a great cat with an enormous upright tail has followed her, and rubbed himself comfortably against her knees.

"She is a blessed little old maid — that's just what *she* is! But the cat is not the only 'follower.' A wholesome-looking Englishman (side-whiskers, fresh complexion, china aster in buttonhole) comes now and then. The little Mayflower chair rocks a bit more nervously, the cat is overwhelmed with surprise by receiving a slight push from the tidy slipper, the tatting takes on new energy, and I see — well, now, you surely don't expect me to tell you what I see? Nothing very dreadful nor altogether unusual in the sphere of my happy woman and the British coachman, who has her in his 'heye' and is surely going to have her in his 'ome by and by.

"But when my tired general comes home to me and keenly scans my face to discover whether I am pining for the pines or sighing for the sea, I cannot disgrace myself in his eyes by revealing my low interest in my happy woman. Least of all reveal my own loneliness! I show him the lovely little window-box where I have a climbing nasturtium, a morning-glory, and a curious strong vine that has prehensile fingers at the end of every cluster of leaves. I show him the curious ways of these strong climbers — how the nasturtium has no tendrils, but a great fleshy stalk to be supported, and so when it grows too tall to stand alone, it puts forth at intervals a leaf with a mission; as soon as this leaf feels the touch of the string, it contracts and wraps its brittle stalk thrice around it — in and out, as you would wind your ball of silk. And how the great long feelers of the morning-glory behave just like ourselves. They look abroad for something to lean upon, waving restlessly to and fro. Finding nothing, they deliberately turn and *lean upon themselves!*

"My general pities me because the square of blue sky into which I am always looking is so small. But I tell him of all the glories and marvels I have seen there, between the high stone dwellings that shut it in: how a rain-bow spanned it once; how my Lady Moon looks down in some of her phases and tells me of her hard life of hopeless bondage — while mine is but for a little time; how the Pleiades have been seen in my small heaven and bound me with sweetest influences; how my friend, the Great Bear, straddles across for a look at me, and a reminder that he knows me very well, and knew generations of my fathers long before the twenty-three generations that I know of myself.

"And I have still more to tell him of the lovely time I am having in my room — how I have watched a fairy castle grow against my sky. How I saw at first a derrick spring aloft, and then many tiny spirits of the air build away on a square foundation; how they made port-holes in the top looking every way for the Mafia or any other enemy, and over this threw arches and fairy adornment of cunning work in white marble; how they threw up a rocket then and hung out electric lights, and I supposed their work was over and their airy castle finished, but they then mounted a great calcium light to let the incoming ships from foreign lands know our eye is upon them; how they built another and still another story to their castle — four in all, and were still building. And I call his attention to a strange bird coming regularly at the same hour in the evening, sailing (with 'a raucous voice') across our dwelling and into my own little plantation in the sky. He is of the species vulgarly called 'Bat' — and so I named him our Fledermaus. At precisely the same hour every morning has he come back again, screaming triumphantly, or putting on a bold front to account to his mate in Central Park how he had spent the night in the Long Island marshes. The first time the flashlight was kindled in my castle in the air and its searching glance fell upon the recreant Fledermaus, he wheeled around and made his circuit in another direction, and we shall hear his raucous voice no more!

"Which is additional proof of what we know already: 'Conscience makes cowards of us all.' Or perhaps it is only that no self-respecting Fledermaus can be expected to countenance flashlights at hours when sensitive folk are coming home in the morning.

"My general listens respectfully while I go through all this. 'Evidently "stone walls do not a prison make,"' is his comment. 'Here are you interested in botany, astronomy, and in building the Madison Square Garden.' 'Garden! Do stone walls a garden make?' 'Here in New York they do,' he tells me; 'a great, hot theatre is to be called a garden and crowned by Diana of the Ephesians! St. Gaudens is making the goddess. But *you'll* not need gardens or goddesses to make you happy! Ah! What a wonderful woman you are — so content, so cheery in spite of all our privations.' Which shows what poor creatures men are, as far as discernment goes, regarding the ways of women; for my dear, oh, my dear! — a very lonely, homesick, heartsick body is

"Your devoted
"SARA A. PRYOR.

"P.S. — I am a wretch — I know I am — to end my letter with a howl. But an organ-man under my window is grinding away at 'Home, Sweet Home.' He must be driven away or I perish! There he goes again — 'The Old Folks at Home'! I must put both my sofa pillows over my ears! Dearly, S. A. P."

CHAPTER XXXIX

EARLY in the winter I had a visit from a beautiful young lady, an orphan daughter of a rear admiral of whom I had known in former days. She had found herself temporarily embarrassed, and had planned an afternoon of music and reading, was about to send out some cards, and wished me to be one of her patronesses. I gladly consented, and on the afternoon designated, went to her boarding-house near the Park, her landlady having kindly given her rooms for the entertainment. I was early, and as nobody appeared I pressed the negro boy at the door into my service, and placed some palms I found at hand, arranged the desk, and awaited the reader and her audience. Presently Bishop Potter entered, carrying the bag which held his robe, on his way, perhaps, to christen a baby. I knew him "by sight," and ventured to introduce myself, simply as "Mrs. Pryor," explaining my presence. He told me of his interest in the occasion and in the young lady who was to read, adding, "I know little of her qualification for her task, but I *did* know her father." Presently who should walk in, tall, grim, and unattended, but General Sherman! The bishop instantly presented me as Mrs. General Roger A. Pryor. I was so wrought upon, finding myself in this awful presence, that I exclaimed, "Oh, General

Sherman! *Never* did I think I should find myself in the same boat with *you!*"

He looked at me gravely a moment, and said: "Now see here! I'm not as black as I am painted." — "And I," said the bishop, "am sorry, sorry, to find the wife of my good friend, the general, willing to remember things past and gone forever."

"Well," said General Sherman, "if she doesn't forbid me the house, I should like to call on General Pryor! I'm told they have the cosiest little home in New York."

He did call, and so did his charming daughter, Rachel, whom I liked, and hope I made my friend.

As to the "reading" — Mrs. Botta, Mrs. Bettner, the two great ones and my own small self were the major part of the audience, — fit though few, — but I must confess that no occasion could have been to me fraught with more interest, more significance. My thoughts rushed back to the time when the man before me had marched through an unhappy Southern state without even a wheelbarrow to intercept his way, when all laws of civilized warfare were sent to the winds, and the women and children, in a belt sixty miles wide, were plundered and driven from their homes; returning, after he had passed, to weep over the blackened plains he left behind him. In his official report of his operations in Georgia he said: "We consumed the corn and fodder in the region thirty miles on either side, from Atlanta to Savannah, also the sweet potatoes, hogs, sheep, and poultry, and carried off more than ten thousand horses and mules. I estimated the damage done to the state of Georgia at one hundred millions of dollars, at least twenty millions of which inured to our benefit, and the remainder was simply waste and destruction."[1] But the blame for this pillage must be placed higher than the shoulders of General Sherman.

On December 18, 1863, Major-general Halleck thus instructed him: "Should you capture Charleston, I hope by *some accident* the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be sown on the site, it might prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and treason."

Sherman replied December 24, 1863: —

> "I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and do not think 'salt' will be necessary. When I move, the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will naturally bring them to Charleston first, — and if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel she deserves all that seems in store."

A solid wall of smoke by day, forty miles wide and from the horizon to the zenith, gave notice to the women and children of the fate that was moving on them. All day they watched it — all night it was lit up by forked tongues of flame lighting the lurid darkness. The next morning it reached them. Terror borne on the air, fleet as the furies spread out ahead, and murder, arson, rapine, enveloped them.

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[1] Sherman's "Memoirs," Vol. II, p. 223.

Mrs. Vincenzo Botta.

But why repeat the story? This was war, war that spares not the graybeard, childhood, aged women, holy nuns — nobody! Not upon one only does the responsibility for such crimes rest. Nor is it for us to desire, or mete out, an adequate punishment. The Great Judge "will repay" — unless, as I humbly pray, He has forgiven, as we have forgiven, and I trust been ourselves forgiven.

No Southerner, however, can wholly forget, as he stands before the splendid statue made by St. Gaudens, at what price the honors to this man were bought. The angel may bear, to some eyes, a palm of victory, and proclaim, "Fame, Honor, Immortality, to him whom I lead." To the eye of the Southerner the winged figure bears a rod, and the bronze lips a warning — "Beware!"

Our earliest and most faithful friends in our new home were Judge Edward Patterson (our first visitor) and his amiable and gifted family. Much of our happiness was due to their sympathetic attentions, at a time when we had few friends.

One of my early friends in New York was Mrs. Vincenzo Botta, whom I had met at the house of Mrs. Dix when we were negotiating with Colonel Mapleson, Patti, and Nicolini. She was then about sixty-nine years old. She died seven years after she first came to my little home in 33d Street, and a warm friendship grew to full maturity in those few years. Without beauty she had yet a charming presence, with no evidences of age, although the little black lace mantilla she wore over her curls was her own confession. She was the only woman who held at the time, or has held since, anything like a real salon. Nobody was ever known to decline an invitation to that house. It was one of the large, old-fashioned houses near Fifth Avenue, with San Domingo mahogany doors, wide staircase, and four spacious rooms on each floor. There were tapestries on the walls, a few good pictures, three busts, — one of Salvini, one of the hostess's husband, the other her maid, — wood fires, and fresh flowers every day. The gracious white-haired lady at the head of the house had a charm born of long experience in all the gentle ministrations of life; her mind was beautifully cultivated, the bluest blood filled her veins; but not from her lips did one learn anything of her distinguished antecedents, although she had been an author, a sculptor, and poet. She came nearer to the distinction of holding a salon than any one who has ever lived in New York. At her receptions might be found Salvini, Edwin Booth, Modjeska, Christine Nilsson, and every distinguished author and diplomat who visited the city. Nobody was ever hired to entertain her guests — they entertained each other. Sometimes a great singer would volunteer a song, or a poet or an actor give something of his art, of course never requested by the hostess. Sometimes the evening would close with a dance.

One often wondered at the ease with which Mrs. Botta could gather around her musicians, artists, actors, authors, men and women of fashion, men conspicuous in political life, — every one who had in himself some element of originality or genius. Her salon was not inaptly termed a reproduction of

Lady Blessington's or the Duchess of Sutherland's. A card to her *conversazione*, as she preferred to term it, was, as I have said, eagerly sought, and never declined. Her afternoon teas were famous; but her dinners! I do not mean the terrapin and wines — the table-talk in this mansion was the attraction. Everybody came away not only charmed, but encouraged; thinking better of himself, and by consequence better of his fellow-creatures.

Dinners like these are constantly given to-day all over the country. Perhaps our best and highest people — those that constitute the honor and pride of our social life, and redeem our manners from the criticism to which they are subjected — are the people who manage never to appear in the papers. They give dinners of great taste and beauty that are never described. At their tables are gathered the wit and wisdom of many lands, and whatever accessories can be commanded by taste and wealth. These stars of the social firmament revolve in a sphere of their own, — around no wealthy or titled sun, — but around each other. Vitalized by one powerful magnet, they at once, like iron filings, attract each other.

I had known nothing of Mrs. Botta's prestige nor of her friendship with Emerson, Carlyle, Froude, Fanny Kemble, Frederika Brémer, Daniel Webster, Charles O'Connor, Fitz-Greene Halleck, even Louis Kossuth, when she first visited me, introducing herself; nor did she ever allude to any one or anything (as so many do!) to impress me with her claims to my consideration. A most fascinating talker herself, she proceeded simply to draw me on gently to talk of myself, — and no magnet can draw like human sympathy. I once found myself telling her something of my experience in time of war, encouraged by her splendid eyes fixed upon me in rapt attention.

Presently their light was veiled in tears, and rising from her seat she took me in outstretched arms and kissed me. No wonder that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David from that hour.

She could even sympathize with so small a matter as my dolors anent the hot summer I had passed — "Yes, yes," she said, "I know all about it." She had written a dismal catalogue of the miseries of the dog-days, of which I remember the concluding lines: —

"When Phœbus and Fahrenheit start a rampage
Then there's heat, no thoughts of a blizzard assuage ;
And when 'General Humidity' joins in the tilt
Like plucked flowers of the field the poor mortal must wilt,
Till he cries like the wit, in disconsolate tones,
To take off his flesh and sit in his bones !
But for all that, my dear, to make myself clear,
Give me New York for nine months of the year —
With all its shortcomings there's no place so dear !
With its life and its rush, what it does and has done,
There's no city like it under the sun."

In which I have come to agree with her.

In her drawing-rooms, beautiful by specimens of her own work, — for she was a sculptor and exquisite needlewoman as well as poet and graceful hostess, — I met many of the literary lights of the day, as well as society women of New York. "I shall give a reception to Miss Murfree," she once told me. "Why?" I asked. "Is she one of your great people?" "Do you remember," said Mrs. Botta, with a twinkling eye, "'Dorinda Cayce'?" I remembered Dorinda Cayce in the "Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountain," who had gone through storms of snow and tempest to win pardon for her lover in prison, only to discover at the end he was but an ordinary, selfish mortal. There was nothing so remarkable about that, I submitted. "Ah! but don't you remember how she explained the wonderful fact that, with all his faults, *she* had loved him and had been ready to die for him? 'No — no —' said Dorinda, 'I *never* loved *you!*' I loved what I *thunk* you was.' Then and there," said Mrs. Botta, "she reached deep down into the mysteries of a woman's heart. We love what we *think* they are! I shall give her a reception."

I had met William Cullen Bryant five or six years before, not long before he died (I have seen so many setting suns!), and Mrs. Botta, who had known him well, was interested in my account of an interview with him. We had come over from Brooklyn to attend a reception which the publisher of Johnson's Encyclopædia gave to his contributors. One of his articles had been written by my husband. At this reception I also met Bayard Taylor, Clarence Stedman, and others, with whose talents in invective against the South I was familiar. But I bore them no malice. I was especially anxious to speak with the old poet, and sought an introduction to him. When the crowd passed on to the refreshment rooms, I observed him standing alone, leaning upon the grand piano, and I ventured to join him. Supper *versus* William Cullen Bryant! There could be but one conclusion. I made bold to hope he was well, as I stood almost spellbound before his fine gray head. I found myself hoping something more. I was willing he should hate treason with all his heart — but I did wish he could ever so little like the traitor!

"Oh, yes," he replied to my question, "I am perfectly well. But I find I am growing old."

"I warrant," said I, "you could struggle for your oysters with the best of them."

"True," he replied, "but that is not the trouble. I forget people's names."

"A poet can afford to forget. Only politicians need be careful."

"Nobody can afford to be unkind," answered the old poet.

"Names are small matters," I suggested. "If you remember faces, you are all right."

"Oh, no," said he, "you must remember names. I did not arrange this drama in which we are all acting, but I know a part of my rôle is to remember names. If I am presented to Mr. Smith, and I meet him next day in Broadway, I think it was intended I should say 'Good morning, Mr. Smith.' Otherwise, why was I presented to him? If I have forgotten his name, I have forgotten my part, and lose the only opportunity that will ever be given me in this world of being polite to Mr. Smith."

Mrs. Botta delighted in such incidents as this. I wish she could have laughed with me over an attempt my Gordon (Mrs. Henry Rice) made to introduce Mr. Bryant to a class of poor white boys she was teaching at a night-school in her home on a great tobacco plantation in Virginia. She had taught them to read and write, some arithmetic and geography, even some Latin; and was minded to awaken the æsthetic instincts which she believed must exist in the poor fellows. She read them Bryant's "Ode to a Waterfowl." "Now, boys," she said eagerly, "tell me how *you* would feel if you had seen this." There was dead silence. Appealing to the most hopeful of her sons of toil, she received an enlightening response, "I wouldn't think nuthin'." "What would you say?" she persisted. "Wall — I reckon I'd say, 'Thar goes a duck!'"

Nobody was kinder to us than Edmund Clarence Stedman. On Tuesdays and Fridays one might always find a welcome — no cards were issued — and a small, choice company of literary men and women in his drawing-rooms. Mr. Stedman was the soul of kindness. His "friends from the Old Dominion" were just as welcome as if he had never written "Abraham Lincoln, give us a MAN" to crush out our "rebellion." No man could have been more generous to authors, himself so polished and graceful a writer. I remember in my own first timid venture — I had written something for the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* — that he made haste to welcome me, to say my essay was "charmingly written," and to add, "I have always observed that whatever a lady chooses to write has something, an air, that the rest of us can never attain," — which goes to prove the chivalry, if not the perception, of dear Mr. Stedman.

In the eighties there were other houses where purely literary receptions were held weekly: notably at President Barnard's, also at Mrs. Barrow's, affectionately known by her own *nom de plume*, "Aunt Fanny," and thus recorded to-day in encyclopædias of literature. Mrs. Andros B. Stone also gathered the elect in her drawing-rooms. There I saw again the gentle Madame Modjeska. There I met Henry M. Stanley, thronged with admirers, and with great drops of perspiration on his heated brow, — declining to say to me "nay" when I asked if this were not worse than the jungles of Africa!

What a life he had led, to be sure! We first heard of him as a soldier in the Confederate army; then in the Union navy. He represented "the Blue and the Gray" — he had worn them both. We all know of his search for Dr. Livingstone, of his subsequent marches through the Dark Continent; of his perils by land, perils by sea, courage and fortitude. And now here he was — quite like other people — in an evening coat with a gardenia in his button-hole, and with an English bride all in white and gold, and still young enough to fill the measure of his glory with more adventures.

I was early elected a member of the Wednesday Afternoon Club, proposed by Mrs. Botta, whose first able contribution — a review of Matthew Arnold's essay, "Civilization in the United States" — enlightened me as to what might be expected of me when my turn came to provide a paper for discussion.

I think I disappointed Mrs. Botta by persistently "begging off" from this duty — implied by my consent to become a member of the club, which included Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, Mrs. R. W. Gilder, Mrs. Almon Goodwin, Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Miss Kate Field, Mrs. George Haven Putnam, and other literary women. Mrs. John Sherwood was one of our grande dames, altogether a very notable personage in her prime, a much-travelled lady, the friend of Lord Houghton, Daniel Webster, and other great lights. She could always gather a large and admiring audience at her literary conferences. She lived to an old age, and never ceased to be "a personage" — a very fine type of a high-born, high-bred, intellectual woman. These reunions, which led society in the eighties, afforded opportunity for the man or woman of versatile talent. Anybody can harangue or read an essay or exploit a special fad or hobby. Anybody can chatter, but how many of us can pass a thought "like a bit of flame" from one to another; or turn, like a many-faceted gem, a scintillating flash in every direction? This is possible! This made the charm of the French salon, and makes the charm to-day of more than one little drawing-room that I wot of, which has never been described in the society columns of the newspapers.

I must not dare put myself on record as enjoying only "high thinking." The great Dr. Johnson liked gossip, so did Madame de Sévigné, so did Greville, and hundreds of other delightful people. So do I! But I draw a line at some modern gossip, — whether Mrs. Claggett's domestic unhappiness will reach the climax of a divorce, whether she will better herself in her next venture; whether Mrs. Billion will really have any difficulty in getting into society, or what on earth Lord Frederick could see in that pug-nosed Peggy Rustic, who hasn't even the saving grace of a little money. I am afraid of personalities, and yet we cannot always discuss politics and religion. Men have been burnt at the stake for talking politics and religion!

I have never sympathized in the wholesale abuse of New York society — and by this much-used word I mean the society defined by Noah Webster as "that class in any community which gives and receives entertainments." Necessarily a city like New York must be made up of many contrasting elements — but I believe the true leaven of good society is always here, and will in the end inevitably prevail to the leavening of the whole. One cannot fail to observe in the modern novels that profess to expose it situations that could, under no circumstances, ever have occurred in decent society. The facility with which men and women of humble antecedents reach high position here is easily explained. Their early disadvantages have taught them enterprise, to look out for their own advantage and seize every opportunity. They have ambition. Hence they are "climbers." The lowest rung in the ladder successfully reached, there is foothold for the next. They are not sensitive. "Snubbed?" said one. "Of course! Isn't everybody snubbed?" It is not wonderful that New York receives them. Their wits are sharpened. They are very agreeable, very supple, very adaptable.

Au reste! Well, they learn. There are books on "Manners and Social Usages" to be had for a dime or two. There is one called "The Gentleman" which was popular in the nineties. To have read Mr. Howells on this book is to long to quote him. "We have lately seen how damaging Mr. McAllister could make himself to the best society of New York by his devout portrayal of it, and now another devotee of fashion is trying to play the iconoclast with the ideal of gentleman.

"Do read 'Gentleman.' It is the most delicious bit of ridiculous flunkyism that has appeared yet — always excepting the great success in that line. After instructing the proposed gentleman about his cravats and pocket-handkerchief, and not to cross his legs or wink or pick his teeth, the author concludes: 'In making an offer of marriage, when the lady replies affirmatively, immediately clasp her in your arms'!"

But after all said and done against society, I have always liked it. I have not the least wish to turn reformer. It will work out its own salvation as to important characteristics, and we can afford to laugh at its ridiculous ways. We know it is "too bad for blessing," but at the same time "it is too good for banning."

"I overheard Jove," said Silenus, "talking of destroying the earth; he said he had failed; they were all rogues and vixens, going from bad to worse. Minerva said she hoped not; they were only ridiculous little creatures with this odd circumstance: if you called them bad, they would appear bad; if good, they would appear so; and there was no one person among them who would not puzzle her owl — much more all Olympus — to know whether it was fundamentally good or bad." It all depends upon the point of view, and in a difference of opinion between Jove and Minerva I do not hesitate.

But if I may be allowed one more word, I think the trouble about our New York society is that we have too much of it. We have no leisure to select. And then we seem to be always *en representation* — as Senior said of an American girl. We are consumed with a desire to make an impression, — that deadly foe to good manners, — or else we wrap ourselves in reserve like a garment. Of the two I think I prefer the former — anything but the icy dulness of the intense inane.

To tell the truth, we are heavy — we Americans. We cannot pass quickly, "like a bit of flame," from one thing to another. We are rarely gracious enough to wish to please, but if we do, our compliments are not an ethereal touch, but flattery broadly laid on with spade and trowel. Chesterfield says, "Human nature is the same all over the world." That is, doubtless, true, — we hear it quoted often enough, — but there is a great deal more of it in some places than in others. There is an enormous quantity of human nature in New York. After all, it is not as subtle as we imagine. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu declares that in all her life she had seen but two species of human beings — men and women! We cannot agree with her, — we have seen others, — but we have faith that all things are working together for good, and good only, in our social life, indications to the contrary, reports to the contrary, notwithstanding.

* * * * * *

Our little house on 33d Street was the theatre of many pleasant events. There I found my friends on my Thursdays at home. There my daughter Lucy was married. Among her wedding presents was an interesting bit of embroidery from the wife of our Minister to Turkey, S. S. Cox. Mr. Cox had sent it with a letter, at the conclusion of which he explained, — remembering my supposed interest in Southern dialect, — "I am sorry to be so stupid, but the truth is I'm mighty tired! I have been toting Americans over Constantinople all day."

I answered, requesting a key to the embroidery, and added, "I am sorry to find that the onerous duties of our Minister to the Ottoman Empire include the bearing upon his back or in his arms the bodies of visiting Americans, etc. ('Tote,' an old English word now obsolete, is still used by Southern negroes for bearing a burden, not for conducting or escorting.)" Here is Mr. Cox's reply: —

"U. S. Legation, Constantinople,
"May 22, 1886.

"My dear Mrs. Pryor: —

"If your daughter was half as much pleased with my wife's little gift as your letter made me, then the *entente cordiale* between the Bosphorus and the Hudson is firmly established. These little ministrations are very little; but —

"'To the God that maketh all
There is no great — there is no small.'

Some Brahmin said that! I think it is one of Emerson's petty larcenies from the Orient; but it is ever so true. Now

"'On what a slender thread
Hang everlasting things,'

as the Methodists used to sing! Here, on my little word 'tote,' you hang a social and philological disquisition! I will not discuss the word in its Africanese dialect; but I take the noble red man — whose totem is his household god; and in this sense, in this connection, let the doyley be revered, as your husband would say, *totus atque rotundus.*

"The bit of Oriental work with its cabalistic characters bears the Sultan's monogram. It has a story, too — this monogram. It is said to be seen in blood in one of the temples of Stamboul, St. Sophia, on a column so high up that a man of my size can't see it. It is said that the blood came from the hand of Mahomet II when he rode into the church. It is shaped like a hand, you may see. Another tale not so harrowing: It is that Amurath, when he made the first treaty with a Christian power, — a small republic of Ragusa, — lost his temper and dipped his five fingers in ink, and thus made his mark on the parchment. This is the *tongbra*, or seal. The present Sultan has added a flower to his handicraft.

"All this goes on the supposition that the embroidery sent Miss Lucy has the cipher on it, but as Mrs. Cox is out bazaaring, — or shopping, — I must guess at it.

"All I can add is to express my regards for your husband, who is my *beau ideal* in many ways. Doubtless he is your 'bold idol,' as a young lady said. Tell him when the time comes, to warm that place for me! I will go back to Congress and die in harness. I don't want to die here, — in fact I don't want to die at all as yet, for life has so much blessing and beauty — in spring!

"Mrs. Cox and I go this evening to dine at the palace of Zildez — the pleasure-house of the Sultan. It is not mutual that I must take my Only One to see him and I can't see any one of his ten thousand and altogether lovely.

"Yours faithfully,
"S. S. Cox."

CHAPTER XL

I HAVE always thought that New York's Centennial celebration in 1889 was largely responsible for the patriotic societies of men and women which have swept the country.

Everybody was willing at the time of the celebration to sit for two entire days on rude seats under the April sun while the evidences of the power and achievements of our great country passed in review before us.

We remember the military pomp of the first day, the dignified carriage of the governors of our United States as they bared their heads in gracious acknowledgment of the cheers of the people, the triumphant blare of trumpets, the stirring strains of martial music, the glitter of bayonets, the long, living line, which was only a small part of the nation's bulwark against its possible foes.

Then the schools and colleges, then the gorgeous civic parade and the illustrations and representatives of the trades, occupations, and nationalities that have found a home in our broad land.

All this passed before us and is but dimly remembered. No permanent impression was made by the great display. Little remains except the recollection that there were millions and millions of people lining our pavements, that the show was hardly adequate to the expectation of these people, that it was a time of many mistakes and much discomfort.

But this pageant was not all of the Centennial. A number of men of taste and feeling had conceived the happy idea of collecting revolutionary relics, papers, and portraits, and exhibiting them in the Metropolitan Opera House.

We expected to be interested in these, and some of us gave time and thought to the task of making the collection as choice as possible. But we were unprepared for the effect of the exhibition upon the minds of the beholders. We filed along the galleries of the Metropolitan Opera House and mused over the papers of "The Cincinnati"; the books, few and well worn; pocket dictionaries with book-plates, candlesticks that had held the tallow dips in difficult times; silver caddies that had done duty in the "tea-cup times"; pewter platters that had served many a frugal meal at Valley Forge; the curtains that had shaded the bed of Lafayette; the piano-cover embroidered by sweet Nellie Custis; pathetic empty garments, the silken coat of George Washington, the brown silk gown of Martha Washington. We remembered at what price the glories of the preceding days had been purchased. We lived over the early times of anxiety, privation, and danger. Raising our eyes to the walls, we encountered the pictured eyes of the men and women whose spirit, behind our little army, had compelled events and given dignity and importance to our Revolutionary history.

It was difficult to associate thought, learning, courage, foresight, and statesmanship with those placid faces. Artists of that day presented only the calm, impassive features of their sitters. There was George Washington, serene in every pose, dress, and age; Alexander Hamilton, Richard Henry Lee, keen-eyed Patrick Henry, Martha Washington, Elizabeth Washington, fair Nelly Custis, dark-eyed Frances Bland, whose patriot brother fills a lost grave in Trinity churchyard. These and scores of others looked down upon us from the walls of our great opera-house.

And yet it is this, and this only, of all the pageant that made a living and lasting impression upon the minds of the people. Pondering upon the associations connected with these relics and portraits of the Revolutionary time, and rereading the histories connected with them, an impulse was given which is now thrilling our people to the extremest bounds of our country, and which will result in our taking proper steps to acquire and preserve all the localities connected with the struggle for our independence.

I was keenly interested in the celebration. I knew the president, Mr. Henry Marquand, and took upon myself the duty of collecting portraits from Virginia — of Patrick Henry, members of the Washington family, Nelly Custis, Frances Bland, and others. I cherish an engraved resolution of thanks adopted by the committee, stating that such thanks were "especially due" for my "valuable coöperation in the work of the Loan Exhibition of portraits."

The influence of the feeling inspired at the time of the Centennial at once expressed itself in the formation of the societies of patriotic men and women now so numerous in this country. I assisted in the foundation of these societies — the Preservation of the Virginia Antiquities, the association owning Jamestown; the Mary Washington Memorial Association; the Daughters of the American Revolution; and the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. The duty of organizing a chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was assigned to me, and I named it "The New York City Chapter." Mrs. Vincenzo Botta was my first member, and Mrs. Martha Lamb, honorary life member. I was much in conference with Mrs. Martha Lamb when she was helping to organize the Colonial Dames — and I was early, heart and soul, interested in the Daughters of the American Revolution. Of Jamestown and the noble society which owns it — everybody knows. I managed a great ball at the White Sulphur Springs to help build a monument over Mary Washington's grave. The governors of New York and of Virginia each sent flags — from the state of my birth and the state of my adoption. General Lee conducted the Mary Washington of the hour. The Virginia beauties wore their great grandmother's gowns of quilted petticoat and brocade, and I received a large sum for the monument.

For the Mary Washington monument Mrs. Charles Avery Doremus, with Mrs. Wilbur Bloodgood, gave a beautiful play, for which the Secretary of the Navy lent me colors enough to drape the entire house. I cherish the permit I received to use these colors. It was signed "George Dewey"! Patti, the guest of Mrs. Ogden Doremus, occupied one of the boxes. The orchestra played "Home, Sweet Home," and she rose and bowed as only Patti can bow. I talked with her between acts and told her what a naughty, candy-loving little ten-year-old maid she had been when she *would* stay in Petersburg with Ellen Glasgow's mother, and Strakosch had to pay her to sing with a hatful of candy! All this she received with her own merry, rippling laughter. It was a kind deed — the great singer to give an afternoon of her time to encourage me in my enterprise, and charm my amiable amateurs by her hearty applause. Authorized by my chief, the widow of Chief Justice Waite, I made the Princess Eulalia and the Duchess of Veragua members of the Mary Washington Memorial Association, and conferred upon them the Golden Star of the order. This was a pleasant souvenir for them of the Columbian Exposition.

The societies based upon Colonial and Revolutionary descent deprecate the idea that anything tending to the creation of an aristocracy is intended by their action, — that they attach any other significance to the accident of birth than the presumption that it insures interest and perpetuity; — that there is any motive underlying their movement less noble than the pure principle of patriotism. Americans, notwithstanding their adulation of foreign titles, have been until lately somewhat sensitive lest they should be thought to assume a right to aristocracy. When Bishop Meade was collecting material for his "History of Old Families and Churches in Virginia," he found the owners of hereditary arms and crests actually ashamed to confess the fact! They felt with Napoleon a desire to create rather than inherit nobility.

The spirit of the times now seems to tend to the American aristocracy of birth, but on the republican foundation of merit, character and service done; not an aristocracy which assumes the right to social rule because of birth, but an aristocracy which recognizes birth as a bond and an obligation. "There can be," said Bishop Potter, "only one true aristocracy in all the world — that of character enriched by learning."

It is interesting to observe the laws that govern enthusiasm. It is like "the wind that bloweth where it listeth" — and no man can discover its source. Once in a hundred years a great wave of patriotic ardor has surged over this continent. Nathaniel Bacon lived a hundred years too soon when he struck the first blow against the tyranny of England. A hundred years later his spirit possessed our revolutionary fathers. Another hundred years passed, and the whole country responded to a similar instinct of patriotism. It is sure to go on and on, and be renewed and invigorated at every centennial celebration; and who will be able to number the ranks, or estimate the strength or compute the riches, or rightly value the influence of the sons and daughters of the American Revolution?

In addition to this and other patriotic societies, a very important national society was formed of the Colonial Dames of America, in which I was interested. No state leads in this association — all are upon an equal footing. The applicant cannot apply, paradoxical as this appears! Her own place in the world, however noble her lineage, must also be considered. She must be gentle of manner as well as gentle of blood.

It is distinctly understood that this society is a firm, though silent, protest against that aristocracy which considers itself best because it is highest on the tax list and bank list. There is not the remotest suggestion of an aggressive spirit, but the steady trend is against plutocracy, arrogance, and that impertinent assumption of place notable in this country in those who have no foundation for pride beneath the surface of the earth, and no aspiration above it.

One of the sure prophecies of our future prosperity and honor may be found in the number and importance of the patriotic societies of women. For, however individuals may sully them by personal pride and ambition, or restrict them by a spirit of exclusiveness antagonistic to the fundamental principles upon which they are based, their very existence proves the decided reaction from certain grave evils which are well known and which certainly will be, unchecked, a source of peril to our beloved country.

I believe in the true-hearted American woman. I have known her in every phase of human experience: in poverty, in suffering, in disaster, in prosperity. I proudly rank myself beside her! Whatever fickle fashion or wayward fancy may decree for her, I know if there be one passionate desire above all others which inspires her heart, it is to leave this world better and happier for her having been born into it, — to become herself a bright exemplar of the beauty of goodness, so that all may be won by the loveliness of lovely lives; to let the whole trend of her life be forward, not backward; upward, not downward; to borrow from the fires of the heroic past to kindle the fires of the future; to preserve to that end the memory of the deeds of those whose lives have set them apart in the history of our country.

CHAPTER XLI

IN the summer of 1888 yellow fever appeared in Florida and raged with peculiar violence in Jacksonville. Early in September I received a letter inviting me to meet a number of ladies at rooms on Broadway to organize a committee for the relief of the Jacksonville sufferers. Mrs. Stedman (wife of the poet) was with me at the time I received the letter, and she agreed with me that it would be a most beautiful thing for the New York women to send substantial relief to their stricken sisters in Florida. So, on the day and hour appointed, Mrs. Stedman accompanied me to the place designated. We found ourselves in the presence of a large roomful of ladies neither of us had ever before seen. I was made chairman by acclamation, and a Mrs. Manton secretary.

I had never presided at a meeting, but I did my best. I invited an expression of the views of those before me as to the wisest schemes for the benevolent work. A great many suggestions were offered of a totally unpractical nature, and I finally asked for an adjournment, to meet two days from the present, and requested my "committee" to consider the matter, confer with their friends, and give me the opportunity to seek advice from mine. Mrs. Stedman seemed much discouraged, as we walked home together. She felt sure nothing would result from this experiment; and besides, as Mayor Hewitt was engaged in collecting funds for the relief of Jacksonville, perhaps all good citizens should send their offerings to him. I intended at the next meeting to follow up her suggestions, but only half a dozen ladies appeared. I represented to them that we must have money at once to pay for our service in future and a small debt already incurred, and we then again adjourned. In the vestibule an army of eager newspaper reporters awaited us, in whose hands I left my friends, having nothing myself to communicate. Next morning every paper in New York announced the interesting fact that Mrs. Roger A. Pryor was president of "The Ladies' Jacksonville Relief Society," that names well known in social and literary circles were associated with hers, and donations of clothing, food, and money were solicited! Of course the press sent me many reporters, and I found myself suddenly invested with importance and armed with authority. I went joyfully to meet my appointment for another meeting, and found a room, full indeed — but of empty chairs! Not a soul came! I waited throughout the hour alone. At the end of it a message was sent in to me from the reporters without. What had we done? What should they say in the next morning's issue of the *Herald*, the *World*, the *Sun*, the *Tribune?* Sorely perplexed, I answered: "Tell the gentlemen we are sitting with closed doors. I shall have nothing to report for several days."

I suppose no woman in all New York was ever in a more embarrassing situation. Here was I advertised as president of a society engaged in a great benevolent enterprise, and the society had simply melted away, disappeared, left no trace, not even a name and address! What would New York think of me? I keenly felt the absurdity of my position, but superior to every personal annoyance was my own disappointment. An opportunity to work effectively for the stricken people of Florida had been suddenly snatched from me. A friend in Jacksonville, having heard of the movement, had written: —

> "I have been prostrated by yellow fever, and am unable to carry out the plans I had made with Bishop Weed for aid for the sick and friendless children here, and the bishop's days are filled with the most pressing duties. Along this pathway through the valley of the shadow of death there are many little children whose pathetic condition touches the chords of our tenderest sympathies. But our hands hang limp and helpless, and so we hold them out to you."

I found myself consumed with longing to help them. I felt then — as I felt afterward for the orphans of Galveston — that I could almost consent to give my own life if I could but save theirs.

These were the dreams of the night, and with the dawn I had resolved to be "obedient to the heavenly vision." Before ten o'clock I sent telegrams to Mrs. Vincenzo Botta, Mrs. Wm. C. Whitney, Miss Rose Elizabeth Cleveland, Mrs. Frederic Coudert, Mrs. Judge Brady, Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, Mrs. Levi P. Morton, Mrs. Don Dickinson, Mrs. William C. Rives, Mrs. William Astor, and Mrs. Martha Lamb. Would they join me in a gift from New York women to Jacksonville?

Every one responded, "Yes, gladly, if you will manage it." Mrs. Astor, Mrs. Reid, and Mrs. Coudert sent money — a goodly sum — to start my work.

Here I was, then, with a splendid following — *le premier pas?* Where could I commence? Surely not by begging money — that I would never do. By some means we must earn it. Just then I saw that Mr. Frohman had offered a matinée for the Mayor's Relief Fund. I communicated with Mr. Frohman, asking him to beg the mayor to let my fine committee have this matinée with which to inaugurate our work. His Honor evidently regarded the proposition as indicative of nerve, needing repression. Mr. Frohman quoted him as surprised, and quite decided: "Mr. Hewitt says he thought everybody knew he needed all the money he could get."

He had only that one matinée. Before night I had telegraphed every reputable theatre and concert-hall in the city, and secured *nine!* Thoroughly upon my mettle, I went to work. My support was all out of town except Mrs. Botta and Mrs. Fanny Barrow. We were a committee of three for several weeks, but we diligently increased our strength by letters and telegrams. Mr. Aronson, of the Casino, fixed upon September 27 for his votive matinée, and Mr. John McCaull, who had Wallack's Theatre, selected the same day. "Never mind, madam," said Mr. Aronson; "I'll turn away enough people from my doors to fill Wallack's." "Rest assured, madam," said Mr. McCaull, "I'll turn away enough people from Wallack's to fill the Casino." So I had two great matinées on my hands — fixed for the same day, the same hour.

I knew it would be vital to my interests to have these initial entertainments successful. I busied my brain with schemes which I cunningly revealed to my friends among the merchants. I wanted satin banners painted with palms and orange-blossoms for Mr. Aronson and Mr. McCaull. I wanted beautiful satin programmes for every man, woman, and child who played for me, and for all my patronesses. I craved flowers galore. I longed for fine stationery, white wax, and a seal. I obtained all these things. So many flowers were sent that baskets and bouquets were presented to everybody on the stage. The actors caught the enthusiasm. Mr. Solomon, who sang the topical song at the Casino, introduced happy, appropriate lines. "Aunt Louisa Eldridge" opened a flower sale in the foyer, and made a large sum for the charity. Satin souvenirs were given to everybody with the "Compliments of the Ladies' Jacksonville Relief Society." Every note (a personal one written to each performer) was sealed with white wax and a seal made expressly for me. Little Fanny Rice was bewitching in Nadjy — singing the pretty Mignon song which is borrowed in the play. At Wallack's there was a splendid programme, in which many stars participated — Kyrle Bellew, and others, and a wonderfully funny balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet" — De Wolf Hopper the Juliet, Jefferson De Angelis the nurse, and Marshall Wilder, Romeo!

When it was all over, there was one very tired woman on 33d Street. But next day the papers announced "brilliant audience, beautiful mounting, grand success." Everybody was thanked, by name, through the papers. Mr. Aronson sent me $904.50. Early next morning I was summoned to my parlor, and before reaching it, I heard a masculine voice: "Don't be afraid — speak up now!" Entering, I was confronted by a wee, winsome lassie with long curls, great eyes, a lovely little face from which a big hat was pushed, while a chubby hand was thrust into mine and a sweet little voice said, "I'se dot sumsin for you!"

It was the baby girl of Mr. Stevens, the manager of Wallack's, and the "sumsin" was a big roll of bank-notes — $1620 — while an honest little hand presented the silver fraction, 85 cents.

This money, $2525, was immediately forwarded to Governor Perry, who sent it where it was sorely needed, — to the little town of Fernandina and other small towns in Florida afflicted by the scourge, — Gainsville, Manatee, McClenny, Crawfordsville, and Enterprise. From all these towns, as well as from Governor Perry, I received (fumigated) letters of thanks and assurance that every dollar was used to relieve distress!

From that time onward I thought of nothing, worked for nothing — except the relief of Jacksonville. I was nothing but a theatrical manager. It was the custom of the theatres to present me with the building and play — also with a plan of the house and all the tickets. I had to sell the seats and boxes, do all the advertising, and meet sundry outside expenses — ushers, orchestra, etc. I did all this with little help until my friends returned to town, and then Mrs. Egbert Guernsey, Mrs. Barrow, Mrs. Stedman, and Mrs. Botta became my pillars of strength. Each matinée was honored as were the first two, with satin programmes, banners, and flowers, personal notes sealed with white wax, etc. I sat from morning until night at my desk, and my diary, kept at the time, records two thousand letters written by my own hand. Every theatre gave us a play, and the Eden Musée a varied entertainment, and Mrs. Sherwood came from Rome to give us two readings.

When Mr. Daly's turn came, I had some difficulty in selling seats. The public had endured a good deal of Jacksonville, and began to say, "The Relief Society is still with us," or, "The Jacksonville Relief Society, like Banquo's ghost, 'will not down.'"

My dear friend, Mr. Cyrus Field, found me in some anxiety, and sent me his clerk every morning to ask how I was "getting along," taking entire blocks of seats and filling them with his friends.

Mrs. Jeanette Thurber also came in (when I was flagging) with her large heart and full hands; so our old friends — Mrs. Gilbert, James Lewis, John Drew, George Clark, Kitty Cheatham, and Ada Rehan — played, as the Jenkins of the day announced, "to a large, brilliant, and fashionable house." I added to each of my satin souvenirs for "the cast" a quotation from Shakespeare. Ada Rehan played "The Wife of Socrates" as an afterpiece. On her souvenir was printed in gold: —

"Be she as shrewd
. . . As Socrates' Xantippe,"

"She hath a tear for Pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity."

When the time arrived for Mr. Chickering to give me his hall for a concert, I was beginning to feel a little weary, and was glad to enlist the interest of Professor Ogden Doremus, formerly president of the Philharmonic Society. I wrote letters which brought many offers. "How many?" asked Dr. Doremus. "A hatful," I answered. We poured them out on a table and made a selection. "These," said the doctor, "are fine, fine! But we must have a star! I'll go out to-morrow and sweep the skies for comets. The great planets will not work for nothing."

At night he wrote me: "No hope for a star! Everybody wants money! We must manage with our amateurs."

The next day I drove up boldly to the Metropolitan Opera House and asked for Mr. Stanton. I told him my story, and begged him to "help *me*, to help my poor countrymen."

"I'll give you Alvary!" he exclaimed. "Nothing is too good for your cause!" "Oh," I faltered, —for I was astounded,—"I'm sure Alvary will not condescend to sing with a company of amateurs, to the accompaniment of one piano." "Will not?" said Mr. Stanton; "it is my impression Alvary will do what I order him to do." He continued, however, as Colonel Mapleson had done with Patti, to say that, although this was all true, it would be wise for me to *request* Alvary to sing. This I did, receiving a gracious, acquiescent reply.

Mrs. Shaw, the famous *siffleuse*, had just returned from England, where she had whistled for the Prince of Wales, and I was delighted at her offer to contribute to the concert. The programme was arranged, Mr. Chickering notified, and twelve hundred tickets sent me to be sold. We set the stage magnificently, borrowing rugs, choice furniture, pictures, hangings. We furnished a greenroom with refreshments, cigars, and flowers, — and a remoter private room for the great tenor, — had the banners extraordinarily handsome, and advertised our programme for Friday night, October 12.

Early Monday morning I received the following note: —

> "Herr Max Alvary supposed when he consented to sing for Madame Pryor that she would arrange a programme in accordance with his social and artistic position.
>
> "Madame Pryor has not done this. Herr Alvary will not sing for Madame Pryor."

Before I recovered my senses after reading this astounding missive, I received the following: —

> "Madam; When Mrs. Shaw consented to whistle for you, she forgot she was under contract with Mr. Pond. She cannot appear on any occasion outside Mr. Pond's series of entertainments."

Light broke upon my clouded vision. *This* — the *siffleuse*, was the offending one! I wrote at once to Herr Alvary that the number to which he had objected was withdrawn. I told the telegraph messenger to wait for an answer. He returned after an absence of several hours, and reported: "I asked the gentleman for an answer, and he slammed the door in my face. Then I waited outside till dinner-time!"

Tuesday, Wednesday, passed. I forbore to annoy Mr. Stanton. It was not my will to accept anything against another's will. Herr Alvary might go to — France for me! I should certainly not humble myself to him. In the meantime, Dr. Doremus tried again and again in vain. Thursday! No Alvary, no whistler! A pretty way indeed to treat a confiding public buying tickets to hear both of them!

Finally I broke down. I wrote to the naughty boy, and wrote to *his heart*. I said in conclusion, "While you hesitate, my countrymen are dying." He had a heart and I found it. I received a prompt answer: —

"MADAME PRYOR: —

"I will sing for you Friday, and I will sing as often as the audience wishes. I am sorry for the sorrow I gave you, but — Madame Pryor, *you* know the human voice was never meant for whistling!

"Your humble,

"MAX ALVARY."

The concert was fine. He sang as never before, returning again and again in response to the enthusiastic recalls of the large audience. Mrs. Sylvanus Reed, who was one of my patronesses on all my programmes, brought with her twenty or more of the young ladies of her school. I had not required evening dress, but from my lofty seat in the sky gallery I looked down upon hundreds of the flower-decked heads of my dear American fellow-women.

After Alvary's last number, he appeared in a side aisle, sweeping the galleries with his opera-glass. "Mamma," said my daughter Fanny, "that man is looking for you!" "He'll not find me," I assured her; "he never saw me." "But a man who has seen you is with him and is helping him!" Sure enough, the double barrels were soon focussed upon me in my eyrie, and Alvary, in an impressive manner, waved his hand, laid it upon his heart, and thrice bowed low.

But this was not the last time I saw my naughty, bonny boy Alvary. I was bidden once to spend my day as pleased me best, as it was my birthday, and I elected to see "Siegfried." I tied my card to some violets and threw them at the feet of the then greatest tenor in the world, and he recognized the tribute. Many were the lovely letters I received after this delightful concert, one most charming from my dear old friend, William C. Rives.

But the blessed frost soon came to do more for the stricken city than I could do. I reopened, cleansed, and refurnished St. Luke's Hospital, sent nearly a thousand dollars to Sister Mary Ann to rehabilitate the Catholic Hospital, and a similar sum to the Jacksonville Orphanage. Governor Perry sent a committee all the way from Florida to thank me, letters poured in from distant friends, the papers said lovely things about my effort. "Who is the best theatrical manager in New York?" was asked of A. M. Palmer. "Well," he replied, "if you wish a true answer, I should say Mrs. Pryor!"

In a time of national disaster no other city in the world responds as does New York. Witness the Galveston flood, when one bazaar I had the pleasure of managing yielded $51,000 — witness the San Francisco earthquake! Every heart is warmed with sympathy — every hand open, when real trouble, real disaster, overtakes any part of our country. And nowhere do we find a quicker response than among actors, who are rarely, if ever, rich, and never lead, as others do, a life of ease.

The letters I received from the New York women who had so nobly stood by me and helped me were, for a long time, delightful reading. They are still cherished as a reward second only to the crowning reward — the relief of suffering — which has comforted me all along the subsequent years of my life. They are noble, generous letters, and I wish I could give them here, every one, as models of beautiful letters as well. One, from the gifted Mrs. Vincenzo Botta, is an example of the rest: —

"25 EAST 37TH STREET, December 13.

"DEAR MRS. PRYOR: —

I congratulate you most warmly on the success of your movement in the relief of our Jacksonville citizens, for it is you alone who have been the moving and animating force of it all. It will be a pleasant thing for you to remember always, and for us, too, who have followed your lead, though so far behind. It will not be possible for me to take the place on the committee to which you appoint me. Do take it yourself, dear Mrs. Pryor! You *ought* to do so. Now the burden of this work is over, you should not give it into other hands. So I beg you earnestly to take my place.

"Ever cordially yours,
"ANNIE C. L. BOTTA."

It had been suggested that the committee which had exhibited so much ability should not disband, but remain as a permanent organization for the relief of sudden national disaster. I had wished to see Mrs. Botta at the head of this committee.

We finally, to our regret ever since, elected to disband. When I rendered my report and bade my dear co-workers adieu, I told them some pleasant truths. Every banner and every blossom had been given us. The American District Telegraph Company had made no charge for service — messengers sent me daily to await orders.

The press had been very generous to us. For advertising our entertainments, all charges were remitted by the *Tribune*, *Herald*, *Sun*, and other papers. The editors of sixteen New York papers gave us unstinted praise and encouragement. If they perceived cause for criticism, they withheld it. They helped us in every way, and rejoiced our hearts by the sweet reward of approbation. They said that we were "a band of self-denying and gifted women, who add another to the roll of gracious achievements which do honor to piety and womanhood."

We could not follow our work in the little towns of Florida, by the cot of the poor negro or the home of the widow and orphan and destitute. It should be enough for us to know that through us some cooling influence reached their fevered brows, that suitable food and clothing was found for them, that their hearts were cheered in a dark hour by perceiving that they were not forgotten or friendless. We were told that our alms for the orphans were in response to the dying prayers of mothers (a little band of New York children elected to become the guardian angels of one of these hapless orphans), and we learned that our gift to the Catholic sisters was larger than any they received from any other source. We were assured that comfort was restored, pure conduits for water constructed, and good food and clothing provided for the Protestant orphans. We reopened the hospital, needed more than ever in Jacksonville, and about to be closed for want of money. All this was much reward, and we could add to it our own grateful consciousness of having done a noble and worthy deed.

I shall ever feel the deepest gratitude for my support in this charity; for the gift of beloved and honored names, — names never withheld from a noble cause, — for generous forbearance towards myself, and for many words of approbation and encouragement. My heart is full of gratitude, and full also of all "good wishes, praise, and prayers" for the noble band of players who made the great work possible.

"The little band" of children who elected to become the guardians of one orphan was the Morningside Club, their president a very lovely little girl — Renée Coudert.

CHAPTER XLII

IN the autumn of 1900 a strange disaster befell the beautiful city of Galveston. A mighty wave lifted its crest far out at sea and marched straight on until it engulfed the city. It all happened suddenly, in a night. Thousands of men, women, and children perished. Hundreds of babies were born that night, and picked up alive, floating on the little mattresses to which drowning mothers had consigned them. The Catholic sisters and their orphan charges all perished. The Protestant Orphan Asylum, on higher ground, had been built around its first room, and in this central chamber the children were gathered, and spent the night in singing their little hymns. The outer rooms received the shock of the waves, but this small sanctuary remained intact. For many days after the waters subsided, children were found wandering in the streets — some did not know their own names, others anxiously questioned the passer-by — "Where is my mother? Have you found my papa yet?"

The country rushed to the rescue, not to save — it was too late — but to succor the homeless, relieve the destitute.

I was summoned one morning to my reception-room, where I found a committee awaiting me from one of the large newspapers in New York. They bore a message from the proprietor and editor to the effect that he wished to open a great bazaar for the relief of Galveston, and begged I would consent to manage it. My success for Jacksonville had brought me this honor.

I saw at once that I had an opportunity to accomplish great good. I also realized the difficulties I should have to encounter. The bazaar was to be worked up from the beginning, and three weeks were allowed me for the task. My personal influence in gaining patronage and material could not be great — and newspaper influence was an unknown quantity to me. However, "nothing venture nothing have." The very fact of difficulty stimulated me, and I consented.

Accordingly, next day I repaired to my "place of business," a room in the Waldorf Astoria, and found myself equipped with stenographers, typewriters and type-writing machines, a desk for myself, a desk for my assisting manager, and plenty of pens, ink, and paper. After a rapid consultation, a plan of procedure was adopted: we must have influential patronesses, we must have competent managers for fifteen booths, and enlist in our service willing hearts and hands to solicit contributions of material. This was a great work, but we set about it with energy. Our troubles soon arose from the number of offers of assistance which poured in upon us, and the difficulty of selection. Committees were out of the question. There was no time for any such machinery. To avoid delay and complications, I was appointed a committee of one; a die of my signature was cut, and everything relative to the booths passed under my own supervision — every paper was signed with my name, every appointment made by me. Our one-room office was soon too small, and three more rooms added to it, one for Mrs. Vivian's exclusive use, that she might try the voices of the singers who offered their services and decide upon the respective merits of the numbers of musicians who generously proffered help.

I wish I could tell of the splendid work my assistants accomplished — Mrs. Donald McLean, Mrs. John G. Carlisle, good "Aunt Louisa Eldridge," the actress, Mrs. Timothy Woodruff, Mrs. Gielow, Mrs. Marie Cross Newhaus, Mrs. Wadsworth Vivian, Helen Gardiner, the authoress, Mrs. John Wyeth, Miss Florence Guernsey — and many others. With such a staff success was assured.

But I knew well this city of New York. I must have prestige. I must have "stars," and bright ones, on my list of patronesses. To secure them, at a season when many people of social prominence were in Europe, or at country places, required numbers of letters and much time. Finally I made a bold dash for distinction. I remembered that John Van Buren, when asked how he could dare propose marriage to Queen Victoria, replied, "I supposed she would say 'no' — but then she might say 'yes.'" I telegraphed her Majesty, laid the cause of the Galveston orphans at her feet, and craved a word of sympathy in the effort I was making for their relief. Fate was kinder to me than to Mr. Van Buren. She said "yes." She *did* sympathize, and "commanded," from Balmoral, that I be so informed. I then telegraphed the Princess Alexandra, and she answered most graciously from Fredensborg. I then secured as patronesses for the bazaar the Duchess of Marlborough, the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough, Mrs. Cornwallis West, the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Lady Somerset, Lady Aberdeen, Madame Loubet, Madame Diaz, wife of the Mexican President, Madame Aspiroz, wife of the Mexican Ambassador. All of these noble ladies sent personal answers, and many of them sums of money. Sir Thomas Lipton heard of the bazaar and sent from England, unsolicited, $500.

To this foreign list I was able to add a large number of the New York names best known and most highly esteemed with us. With such guarantee for the "tone" of the bazaar, I was assured of patronage.

When the opening night arrived, however, I was possessed with a sickening fear lest there should be no audience. A fairy village of booths filled the great ball-room at the Waldorf Astoria, and the generous merchants of New York had enriched them with rare and beautiful things. Mr. Edward Moran gave one of his famous marines. President Diaz sent a bronze group from the Paris Exposition, representing a reaper with his sickle — his two daughters binding his sheaves. Mr. Stanley McCormick purchased this for the office in Chicago of the McCormick reaper. Rich furs, tiger rugs, opera-cloaks, ladies' hats, silverware, watches, jewels, bicycles, a grand piano, and an automobile were included in our collection. I had written General Miles requesting him to open the bazaar, and he had come from Washington with Mrs. Miles. When I arrived on the opening night I was conducted to the small ball-room, where I found ten or more major-generals in full uniform, Governor Sayre from Texas, Mr. Aspiroz, the Mexican Ambassador, who had come from Washington to bring us the present from President and Mrs. Diaz, and ladies of their company. On General Miles's arm, attended by these distinguished men and their wives, we proceeded through crowds of spectators to the lower ball-room. When I entered, I found three thousand people already assembled! The head of the armies of the United States received a magnificent welcome. From Mrs. Astor's box he made the opening address, followed by a most touching narrative from Governor Sayre. My dear Mrs. Carlisle appeared in the box with a lovely wreath of laurel for General Miles. But I cannot describe the scene. Nothing like this bazaar has ever been seen in New York. There have been others — but without the *cachet* of military rank at home and royalty abroad. Telegrams from Mrs. McKinley; letter and a splendid silver present from Admiral and Mrs. Dewey; letter and present of rare embroidery from *petite* Madame Wu of the Chinese Embassy; letter and present of a silver flask from Madame Dreyfus, — these and many similar incidents cheered us in the hour of our triumph — an hour, too, of great bodily weariness.

We rang down our curtain with *éclat* — our own Mark Twain just off his home-coming steamship responding at once to my letter of invitation, and making a happy speech. From my seat in the low box I looked down upon the faces of my sons Roger and Willy, who seemed in anxious conference on some subject. They gave me an encouraging nod. I found they knew, as I did not, that a committee was coming along the gallery to give me flowers, pin an emblem on my bosom, say dear things about my work. They were anxious lest their tired mother should prove unequal to the short speech of thanks demanded of her.

We sent $51,000 to Galveston! I was permitted to select a special object for this large sum. I suggested the building of an orphan asylum in which should be gathered all homeless orphan children, irrespective of creed or country.

Within a year the asylum was erected, furnished, and the hapless children gathered under its shelter. The mover in this grand charity said he could never have accomplished it without me — I could have done nothing without him! He had his friends. He also had his enemies, who rated his charity as an "advertisement." Of all this I know nothing; but I do know that this Orphan Asylum in Galveston was a grand and noble work; and my old and valued friend, Mrs. Phœbe Hearst, has reason to be grateful that it was given to her son to build it. "What can we do for you?" was asked of me by one of the managers at its opening. "Nothing," I answered; "the work is its own reward. But in the daily prayers of your orphan children, let them ask God's blessing upon all those who helped to give this home to His homeless children."

God, I humbly trust, did so bless them all —

the eighty-year-old woman on the Pacific slope who sent a kerchief of her own making; the noble ladies across the Atlantic who promptly gave their honored names and their money; the little boy whose curly head I could see, moving among the crowd soliciting pennies for the orphans; the good woman whose head had grown gray beneath the crown of England.

But especially I wish, I pray, all blessings for the band of dear women who, coming often in rain and storm, worked with me from morning until night to help build a shelter for Galveston's homeless orphans.

Judge Roger A. Pryor in 1900.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE years which had brought me such interesting work were full years also to my dear general. In June, 1888, he delivered an address to the graduating class at the Albany Law School — an address so inspiring, so highly commended at the time, that it should not be lost. He had been all his life intimately acquainted with the great legal lights abroad. They had given him his first aspirations, and been his inspired teachers ever after. And yet he could truthfully tell the American student: —

"Nor need we travel abroad for examples and illustrations of forensic oratory in its highest perfection; for in the sublime passion of Patrick Henry, in the gorgeous vehemence of Choate, in the brilliant and abounding fancy of Prentiss, and in the majestic simplicity of Webster, we find at home every beauty and every power of eloquence displayed with an effect not inferior to the achievements of the mighty masters of antiquity."

Diligently as he studied his profession, he found time for lighter, but not perhaps really more congenial, occupations. From time to time he addressed college societies on literary themes. He wrote for the *North American Review*, the *Forum*, and the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Like his public addresses, his writing was said to display ripe scholarship and a clear, polished style. The highest note was never too high for him!

He would have had to be "made all over again," had he felt no interest in politics. He was born, as he often declared, "a Presbyterian and a Democrat," and he never faltered in allegiance to either. "Oh, God guide us aright," prayed a member of the body that framed the Westminster Catechism, "*for thou knowest we are very determined.*" Having set out in one direction, the worthy brother doubted the power of the Almighty himself to alter his course!

Although my Husband refrained from political talk or discussion, he was glad to be sent to the convention that nominated Mr. Tilden. But probably his first conspicuous appearance on the political theatre was the Gubernatorial Convention at Syracuse, of which he drew the platform, and which resulted in the candidacy of Mr. Cleveland. That platform was acknowledged to have aided materially in the election of Mr. Cleveland. Its author's address in presenting it was much applauded.

Just as I closed my Jacksonville work, my general argued and won his great Sugar Trust case. "Had he done nothing else," said one whose word means much, "he could point to this case as an enduring monument." His rapid rise to fame at the bar is well known. "His legal victories would make a long list," says a contemporary writer, "but he never shrank from a suit because it was unpopular or because the legal odds were many against its success, however just it might be. His deep knowledge of law, his readiness of resource, his care in preparing his case, his unfailing good humor, his pluck, ardor, and clearness in pleading, have made him influential and successful in the courts." Beginning with the Tilton-Beecher suit, he was counsel in the Morey Letter case and the Holland murder trial. He was also engaged in the suits against Governor Sprague in Rhode Island, and the Ames impeachment proceedings in Mississippi. He was the first to win a suit against the Elevated Railroad Company for damages to adjoining property. He was also counsel in the Hoyt will case, the Chicago anarchist trials, and now in the Sugar Trust suit, in which he was successful in the New York City courts as well as in the Court of Appeals. At the time of his direst distress he *refused* a suit against the good Peter Cooper.

It was in 1889 that my husband suggested and conducted the suit against the Sugar Trust, the first litigation in any court or any state against combinations in restraint of trade; and as he was successful against powerful opposition, he acquired a prestige which was the immediate occasion of his appointment to the bench.

On October 9, 1890, Mr. John Russell Young gave a dinner in his honor at the Astor House — a dinner notable for the number of distinguished guests. Among them, Hon. Grover Cleveland, General Sherman, General Sickles, Henry George, Daniel Dougherty, Daniel Lamont, W. J. Florence, Mark Twain, John B. Haskin, Joseph Jefferson, Thomas Nast, Judge Brady, Judge Joseph F. Daly, Murat Halsted, Senator Hearst, — was ever such a company? Laying his hand on my husband's shoulder, General Sherman said: "We would have done all this for him long ago, but he had to be such a rebel!"

He had been appointed to fill the unexpired term of a retiring judge. The next year he came before the people for election, and was chosen by a great majority of many thousand votes to be judge of the Court of Pleas, and soon afterwards became judge of the Supreme Court of New York.

He was welcomed to the bench by every possible expression of cordial good-will, confidence, admiration. Again there was no dissenting voice. At a celebration, not long after, of Grant's birthday, he was one of those invited to speak, and was thus introduced by General Horace Porter: "Gentlemen, we have a distinguished general here to-night who fought with us in the war — but not on the same side. It has been said that it is astounding how you like a man after you fight him! That is the reason we have him here to-night to give him a warm reception. He always gave us a warm reception. He used to take us, and provide for us, and was willing to keep us out of harm's way while hostilities lasted — unless sooner exchanged. He was always in the front, and his further appearance in the front to-night is a reflection upon the accuracy of our marksmanship. Not knowing how to punish him there, we brought him up to New York, and sentenced him to fourteen years' hard labor on the bench."

He brought to the bench the habits of self-denial and unremitting study he had practised for twenty years. During all that time, and after, nobody ever saw him at a place of amusement, theatre, ball, or opera, and very rarely at a dinner-party. He knew no part of New York except the streets he traversed to and from his office or court room. His brief summer holidays were spent at the White Sulphur Springs in Virginia, where his studies continued. In 1895 he there addressed the Virginia Bar Association on the influence of Virginia in the formation of the Federal Constitution, and I venture to say that whoever reads it in its printed form will find interesting historical facts not generally known. In accordance with my plan to permit his contemporaries to tell the story of his public life, I copy one testimonial from a Richmond paper: "Judge Pryor made a splendid address. It was an ornate, learned, and eminently instructive production, and attested the jealous devotion of a distinguished son of Virginia for the old commonwealth, and his careful study of her political history. It did honor to the gentleman who made the address and to the profession of which he is a shining light."

Whatever he wrote was always read aloud and copied at home, until my daughter Gordon left us, even the legal arguments so dimly understood by her. Apart from the technical difficulties, she could always receive some impression from his argument, and the impression upon her singularly clear, unprejudiced mind was what he wished to know. Our own turn in reading aloud gave him a delicious opportunity to correct our pronunciation. His patience could never brook a mispronounced word — and alas, after Gordon married I found myself too old that I might learn. However, he patiently continues to struggle with me.

Once, at the White Sulphur Springs, a beautiful Virginia girl was under my care. My general was absorbed, — it was the summer he made his speech, — and did not render the homage to which the pair of blue eyes was accustomed. "I don't think the judge likes me," she complained; "he never has a word to say to me. He looks as if he's always thinking about something else."

"Lizzie," I suggested, "you must mispronounce a word or two, and we'll see what effect that will have." We put our heads together and made out a list for her to commit to memory. At dinner she fastened her eye upon our victim, and commenced, — offering a flower, — "It's not very pretty, but the perfume′, — " "I beg your pardon, Miss ——, per′fume, accent on first syllable!" he exclaimed. "Oh, you're *so* kind, Judge! This just il′lustrates —" "Illus′trate, my dear young lady! — accent on second syllable, but pray go on." "I've never had anybody to tell me any of these things," she moaned. "If *you* only would — " "With pleasure! A beautiful young lady should be perfect in speech, as in all things." The little minx played her part to perfection. Presently, overcome with the ludicrous situation, she excused herself, and my dear innocent remarked, as his admiring eyes followed her, "An uncommonly sensible girl that!"

I enjoyed a bit of newspaper gossip about this peculiarity of my dear general. A physician was testifying before him in a malpractice case, and repeatedly used the word "pare′sis," accenting the second syllable. The judge exhibited extreme restlessness, and finally ventured, "Excuse me — the word you mean is possibly par′esis?" As the witness proceeded, the offence was repeated and again corrected. "Now, your Honor," said the offender, "I concede all wisdom to the bench in legal matters, but I am a physician, and in the profession the word is pare′sis." "It is par′esis in my court," was the decision promptly handed down, with an emphasis that forbade appeal.

I am sorry I cannot record his services to his country and his profession during the seven years before he was overtaken by the age-limit prescribed by New York law — his championship of maligned women, his decision that divorce cases should not be tried secretly but must be held in open court — now become a law — his restriction of the right of naturalization to at least knowledge of the English language. I cannot go into these learned subjects as I trust some one of the profession will do some day. I only record that my dear general, as was conceded by every one, fulfilled the sacred trust — "he was a father to the poor, and the cause that he knew not he searched out."

This public recognition of his ability and worth, with its opportunity for larger usefulness, came at last as the crown of his long and heroic struggle. The war had left him with nothing but a ragged uniform, his sword, a wife, and seven children, — his health, his occupation, his place in the world, gone; his friends and comrades slain in battle; his Southern home impoverished and desolate. He had no profession, no rights as a citizen, no ability to hold office. That he conquered the fate which threatened to destroy him, — and conquered it through the appreciation awarded by his sometime enemies, — is a striking illustration of the possibilities afforded by our country; where not only can the impoverished refugee from other lands find fortune and happiness, but where her own sons, prostrate and ruined after a dreadful fratricidal strife, can bind their wounds, take up their lives again, and finally win reward for their labors.

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